



**FORGING A FUTURE
FOR THE
LOWER EAST SIDE**

A PLAN FOR ACTION

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FORGING A FUTURE FOR THE LOWER EAST SIDE

A PLAN FOR ACTION

PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

BY ABELES, SCHWARTZ AND ASSOCIATES • 10 KENMARE ST • NEW YORK, N.Y.

DECEMBER 1970

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December, 1970

Hon. Albert A. Walsh
Administrator
Housing and Development Administration
100 Gold Street
New York, New York

Hon. Donald H. Elliott
Chairman
City Planning Commission
2 Lafayette Street
New York, New York

Gentlemen:

We are pleased to submit to you the report of the Lower East Side Development Program, Forging a Future for the Lower East Side. Although they are merged in the report, the Program can be considered in two phases. A Development Plan covers improvements that can be attained in five to six years, while the Development Program describes changes that will take several decades to achieve.

Our mandate from the city was to emphasize opportunities for immediate improvement in the Lower East Side as a place to live and work, with special emphasis on providing new housing. Accordingly, a vest-pocket housing program, using available sites entailing modest relocation, was fashioned. Plans have already been approved and work started for the first stage of this program, which will provide new apartments for about 1,600 families of low and moderate income. If properly carried out, both physically and administratively, the first stage can lay the groundwork for the gradual replacement of housing that the Lower East Side desperately needs. Accompanying proposals for attainable changes cover parks, schools, and other items.

Changes made by mid-decade should be the first part of a commitment extending over several decades that would ultimately replace the Lower East Side's decayed tenements, rebuild its street spaces, parks and schools, remove the automobile from residential blocks, and provide the kind of transportation needed by both residents and workers. In a neighborhood where social needs are grossly undermet, education and health care have to be strengthened and reformed, the varieties of pollution controlled and public services enhanced. A decent livelihood, a sense of personal worth and control over economic, social and political events must also be attainable for every person living in the community.

The Lower East Side is a diverse and vital community needing significant change if it is to survive. In this report we have sought to illuminate opportunities for beginning this transformation. We hope they will receive serious consideration from public agencies and community groups.

Sincerely yours,

ABELES, SCHWARTZ AND ASSOCIATES


Peter Lee Abeles


Harry Schwartz

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PREFACE

Once America's classic ghetto, the Lower East Side is now only one of countless inner-city neighborhoods across the nation into which the poor and minorities are crowded. Formerly the refuge of immigrants fleeing from Central and Eastern Europe, today the Lower East Side is home to different emigrants. They now come not from Russia, Poland or Germany, but from Puerto Rico, the American South and China. More recent entrants are younger single people seeking a haven from the pressures and restraints of the larger society.

In planning for the Lower East Side one feels a certain humility for the neighborhood's history, traditions and style, such as the excitement of Sunday along Orchard Street or the contributions of the settlement houses. Such respect for the past must, however, be tempered with the understanding that for many residents today's Lower East Side is a relic, a place where despair is concentrated and hope is shattered. Thousands of older people, the bonds with the Lower East Side of an earlier era, now lonely and disenchanted, live close to poverty in decaying tenements. Many younger Puerto Rican or Chinese families have equally bleak prospects--near subsistence incomes coupled with dead-end jobs or a destructive welfare system; unresponsive and inadequate educational opportunities and medical care, and an environment that is depressing, unhealthy and unsafe. Between these two extremes there is a sizable middle class, mainly white, but also with numbers of Puerto Rican and black families, living in the private projects and the few good older buildings. Comprising the Lower East Side's economic and social elite, these families share few of the problems and frustrations of their less fortunate neighbors.

A comfortable response to these conditions would be to say that those who are now poor and broken will become a new middle class through an open economy, self-motivation and the appropriate governmental efforts. However, looking at the Lower East Side: its decaying tenements; a population in which only four out of ten families have a wage earner with many working below capacity, or in jobs without a future; the indignities and disorganization of health care and a school system that disappoints or loses many of its students, the adults of tomorrow, one wonders if this self-correcting mechanism can work. Unless unprecedented public, economic, social and political commitments are made, the Lower East Side and other neighborhoods like it may remain almost permanent urban containers for the poor and the minorities.

Policies and recommendations presented in this volume are clustered around a number of key areas: housing and rebuilding, re-use of resources, public services, and jobs and the economy. Recommendations in each area consider desirable changes in the basic conception of

the resource, its physical setting and organization and mode of delivery.

No attempt has been made to fashion a "master plan" encompassing all aspects of life on the Lower East Side or even the total physical setting. Necessity and humanity dictate that the physical rebuilding of the neighborhood proceed gradually over a period of several decades. The availability of resources, the complexion of opportunities and political considerations will shape the scope and nature of rebuilding plans at any moment much more than a judgement made in 1970. Instead, physical economic and administrative guidelines for rebuilding are offered and illustrative plans or formats for typical situations, such as staged reconstruction of a group of tenement blocks, are suggested. In particular instances, where conditions are singularly conducive to planned change, such as the Bowery or Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway, specific recommendations for rebuilding are presented.

Where appropriate, recommendations that can be implemented by about mid-decade have been singled out. These recommendations compose the short-term Development Plan and consist of such things as the first stages of vest-pocket housing (Chapter 5), a schedule for replacing old schools (Chapter 7), and changes in surface transportation (Chapter 6). These short-term measures are compatible with a larger framework of costlier long-term plans that is designated as the Development Program. Specific recommendations for both time spans are shown on Map 6, Proposals.

Rebuilding the physical setting is extraordinarily important to the future of the Lower East Side. This means not only replacing almost forty thousand apartments in obsolete old-law tenements, but doing it gradually, in a way that will not disrupt community life. During the decades of rebuilding, existing tenements must be conserved and managed so that a reasonable level of housing is provided to those who must wait for new apartments. Land use regulations, such as zoning, and administrative practices will have to change to accommodate the density, pace and scale of rebuilding. Reconstruction must take place with groups of blocks with open space, local services and a mixture of housing types available in each new cluster of blocks. Massive financial assistance, in the form of various kinds of subsidies, will be needed to bring housing costs within reach of consumers.

Re-using space resources will be a key feature of a rebuilt community. Through a combination of restrictions and inducements, the heavy traffic simply passing through the Lower East Side must be reduced and redirected. As tenement blocks are rebuilt, local streets can be surrendered as traffic-ways and parking lots. About eighty acres, an area larger than East River Park, can be removed from street use and returned as sites for housing and community

services and open space. As a new street system emerges, a rational system of surface transportation can be established to give the Lower East Side the connections it needs to the rest of the city. Other existing activities and lands must also be reshaped and reused: the East River Park can be made more inviting and safer and brought closer to the community; the neglected Sara O. Roosevelt Parkway and Allen Street Mall can be absorbed as land resources for rebuilding and replaced in more worthwhile ways and the Bowery with its superb location and progressive abandonment can be developed into a major center for living, shopping and working.

Another resource, perhaps the most precious we have, is the natural and man-made environment. Much of the environmental pollution engulfing the Lower East Side is of local origin; produced by tenement heating plants, a heavy volume of staccato traffic, the collection and disposal of refuse and the massive misuse and neglect of the air, streets and open spaces. Steps can be taken both in the community and in the city to curb environmental pollution and restore these vital and fundamental resources.

A community such as the Lower East Side where most people cannot privately purchase education, health care and recreation is heavily dependent on public services. Many of these services, especially the more important ones, such as education and health, are not meeting the needs of residents and in fact may be alienating people from the very resources they require. Demands upon public services not only in the more traditional fields such as police and recreation, but in welfare assistance, job training and specialized education have grown enormously. The Lower East Side needs more of certain services, such as decent schools and useful parks. However, more often the services need to be restructured; their purposes, re-examined; the dependencies they create replaced with equity; the modes of delivery reshaped and the cost structure reconsidered. Education

and health care need not so much new buildings, but new ideas and reconceptions of their purpose and organization.

Four out of ten Lower East Side households are outside the wage economy, dependent upon public assistance, Social Security and similar benefits. Their incomes are inadequate and limited and, as in the case of welfare recipients, they are dependent on an arbitrary and oppressive institution for their very existence. Many of the six out of ten households with a wage earner do not fare much better. Most employed Lower East Siders are in low-skilled, low paid jobs that offer little status and advancement. The cycle of low worker expectations, inadequate abilities and poor job achievement and the nature of the city's economy, with its emphasis on white collar employment, do not offer much hope for substantial income gains to most residents. If those who are employable are to succeed in the working world, their abilities and experiences must change. New approaches combining work and skills development, with a more flexible interchange between education and work, must be instituted. Barriers to jobs, such as discrimination and unnecessary credentials must be abolished and most important, dignity and respect must accompany employment.

Many of these fundamental changes can only occur in the regional and national economy and social structure. Others can result from combined public and private efforts in developing the local economy in a way that will provide well-paying jobs in stable industries committed to the community. For families outside of the wage economy, a humane and sufficient national income maintenance approach is the best answer.

The Lower East Side has played a large role in America's history and emergence as a democracy. One hopes that its setting, people and institutions will be part of America's future.

1. THE LOWER EAST SIDE : A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Lower East Side--now depressed, neglected, unknown to many--was one of the cores of what is now New York City. Since the development of the city was held below 14th Street until 1840, the Lower East Side was an ideal residence close to the governing and commercial heart of the island. Throughout the two hundred years preceding 1840, the Lower East Side served as the residential, administrative, and employment locality of diverse middle-class people who prospered in the climate of a growing city.

Because of its geographical location on the East River, those who landed in Manhattan from the Old World tended to stay in the area, first by choice and later from lack of other choices.

From the beginning, men of different backgrounds populated the seaport of New York. As a seaport, the city centered on trade. Since tolerance has always been the social corollary of trade, it is not surprising that along with the Dutch in the 17th century, a group of Sephardic Jews arrived and peacefully remained; the forerunner of the teeming Jewish ghetto that flourished between 1870 and 1924. Despite ethnic diversity, all of the first New Yorkers crossed the Atlantic in a mood of speculation buoyed by the confidence of proven abilities appropriate for the tasks of the New World. The city enlarged and its streets were the walkways of successful people--tradesmen, shipbuilders, ready-made clothing manufacturers. Even American Negroes gained complete emancipation by 1827.

From the early days of the Republic well into the 19th century, the Lower East Side was a fashionable neighborhood. George Washington lived on Cherry Street when he was first elected President. One of the nation's first country clubs, Belvedere House, was constructed in 1792 on grounds bounded by the present Montgomery, Clinton, Cherry and Monroe Streets. In 1825, 7 Cherry Street was the first home in New York City to be lit by gas. And during the 1830's the Vanderbilts and Astors lived on East Broadway, which was then a "silk stocking" street.

Shortly after 1830, when the Vanderbilts and Astors moved from East Broadway, the population began to change irrevocably and the old, fashionable neighborhood entered a new era. When the great migrations started to this country in the 1840's the laissez-faire tradition of New York functioned as an open passport for millions of European refugees. The new immigrants arrived in hordes, penniless and hopeful. They came to America as the alternative to starvation and persecution. There were refugees from famine; there were peasants abruptly dispossessed of land; there were victims of religious or political harassment and discrimination. These people, Irish, Germans, Chinese, German Jews, Russian Jews, Poles, and Italians, came by the hundreds of thousands to New York. It was the Lower East Side that bore the burden of housing the immi-

grants, preparing them for life in the New World, and sending them on their way.

This small section of Manhattan bounded by the Brooklyn Bridge on the south, 14th Street on the north, Broadway on the west, and the East River, became "New York" and "America" for the newcomers. The area became the employment center for the eager unskilled laborers, the educational center for those wishing to learn the language, customs and mores of the new land; the training center for those who could adapt to the emerging industrial economy; the assimilation center where groups of disparate backgrounds became accustomed to America, the jumping-off point for new arrivals anxious to move forward and out into the mainstream of American life. In 1886 the Statue of Liberty was unveiled, a concrete symbol of this massive flux of humanity, later to bear the famous inscription to "the huddled masses yearning to breathe free." Unfortunately the masses were as huddled in their new land as in the old; while they enjoyed freedom from political repression, their range of life choices was far from free, and the air they breathed was filled with overpopulation.

The first large-scale immigration group was the Irish, who came during the 1840's and settled around Five Points, the multiple intersection of Orange (Baxter), Cross (Park), and Anthony (Worth) Streets. By 1850 this section was known as an "Irish Rookery." The Downtown Tammany Club, located between Oliver and Catherine Streets, was one of the most powerful clubs in the city and a local influence of exceptional importance.

In the 1860's and 1870's the Germans replaced the Irish as the dominant immigrating group in New York and on the Lower East Side. By the eve of the Civil War, two-thirds of the 120,000 German-born residents of New York City were concentrated in Kleindutchland--from East Houston to 12th Street and eastward from the Bowery. In 1890 most of the German group still lived on the Lower East Side, north of Rivington Street. Avenue A was known as "Dutch Broadway" and Tompkins Square as Die Weiss Garden.

The American Gold Rush of 1848 provided the opportunity for the initial emigration of the Chinese from the stricken areas near Canton. As the gold fields in California where they originally found work became exhausted, the whites began to exclude the Chinese from the labor market and they settled in urban areas, becoming cooks and laundrymen. A large number migrated to New York to what is now the heart of Chinatown, bounded on the north by Canal, on the west by Mulberry Street, and on the east and south by the Bowery. Despite its reputation, Chinatown had an almost "laundered neatness" which distinguished it from other areas on the Lower East Side.

German Jews were on the East Side before the pogroms of the 80's and 90's. The Chasam Sopher

Synagogue on Clinton Street just south of Houston, was a reform synagogue founded in 1853 by the German Jews. The East European Jews lived in somewhat separate parts of the Lower East Side. The Roumanians, for example, lived from Delancey Street to East Houston or First Street, and west to Second Avenue. The French-Roumanian Restaurant on Delancey, and the well-known restaurant, Ratner's, remain in what was once the Roumanian section. In the early days a great deal of Russian could be heard on the Lower East Side; Lithuanians set up printing presses; north of Grand Street was the Polish area.

The most famous of the East Broadway newspapers and still the Yiddish daily with the widest circulation in the world, The Jewish Daily Forward, was founded in 1897, and became a leading Socialist newspaper and the backbone of the Jewish labor movement in America.

The Jews kept emigrating heavily until the 1920's when the first Immigration Quota Law limited immigration in any one year to 3 percent of the number of each nationality according to the 1910 census. Second Avenue flourished as the "white light district of Jewry." Molly Picon, Joseph Adler and Menasha Skulnik are some stars of the Yiddish theater who were as well known on Broadway as well as on the Second Avenue stage. Of the literature one critic wrote, "There has sprung up a whole Yiddish literature in America which at its best can hold its head with any literature in the world-- the East Side is the cradle of this culture." Such writers as Henry Roth, Abraham Cahan, and Jacob Rias, immortalized, in their separate ways, the unique Jewish community that came into being on the Lower East Side. Contemporary critics such as Irving Howe continue to acknowledge their debt to the area's Jewish sub-culture: "The span of this collective experience was pitifully short, no more than that of a person, but its reverberations have been enormous. Many of us continue to live off its spiritual capital; uneasy sons in the wilderness."^{*}

At the same time as the East European Jews were coalescing their community, another important group was settling next to them. Between 1880 and World War I, a rising population and economic reorganization displaced millions of Italian peasants from their latifundia, particularly in Sicily and southern Italy. By 1890 there were already thousands of Italians in New York, and the estimated number in 1903 was about 400,000.

The heart of Little Italy was west of the Lower East Side. Its principal streets were Elizabeth, Mulberry, MacDougal, and Bayard. Monroe, Catherine, and Oliver were on the fringes of Little Italy. On streets like Goerck, now Baruch Place, Italians and Jews lived side by side.

There were relatively few Negroes and Puerto Ricans on the Lower East Side until the last three decades. In 1820, Negroes lived on Banker (later Madison) Street. During the 'twenties a small number of Puerto Rican cigar makers settled on Cherry Street.

Close to the point of arrival and to employment opportunities for unskilled, low-wage workers, the Lower East Side was the natural haven for

^{*}Irving Howe, "The Lower East Side. Symbol and Fact," The Lower East Side: Portal to American Life, N.Y., The Jewish Museum, 1966.

those recently landed. In fact, no alternatives of employment were available. The immigrants formed a captive population, immobilized by poverty almost at dockside. Housing accommodations, albeit wretched, were quickly provided and former mansions became houses of many rooms. Typically, a room 12' by 12' was home for five families or 20 people. Commercial structures were converted into multiple dwellings.

By the last decades of the nineteenth century the Lower East Side's living quarters were a mockery of the elegance the area had once possessed. An observer described scenes of daily life:

...the abominably crowded conditions, people living in cellars, in rooms without windows or light, sleeping in hallways, on roofs, on fire escapes, unbelievable heat in the summer, unendurable cold in the winter, filth, noise, outdoor plumbing, endless hours of labor, smells, spectacles of vice flaunted for the children to see, bags of garbage flung with abandon out of tenement windows on to the hats of respectable and dignified citizens passing below, pushcarts, haggling, curses, vermin of all kinds, mice, rats, beetles as big as half-dollars, street fights, gang-warfare, etc.*

What is so poignant about this description is not so much the misery of the past, but the fact that so many of these conditions still persist while new, undreamed of ills have been added, such as drug addiction, homeless alcoholics, and the despair of the young.

The wretched tenements that still house a large portion of today's Lower East Siders came into existence in the middle of the last century. By 1879 the "dumbbell" tenement, so-called because of its shape, won a prize competition and became an acceptable model for building, especially on the Lower East Side, until prohibited in 1901. The tenement population of New York City rose from 500,000 in 1860 to more than a million by 1888. Construction of these deplorable forms of housing was partly a consequence of the builders' free hand. There were no building standards until 1864. The Old Law or Tenement House Law was passed in 1867.

Despite laws and human suffering, tenements proliferated and rear or backyard tenements stifled the remnants of sunlight. As of 1889 there were 2,630 rear tenements in use. Real-estate greed produced the most efficient designs of low-rent housing for maximal rents. The grid imposed on the city in 1811 made possible a grim design efficiency. Given the uniform real estate plot, 20' to 25' wide and 100' deep, the "dumbbell" tenement, with a floor space of 20' or 25' by 90' allowed the creation of four 4-room apartments per floor.

Maximum surface was freed for living quarters by squeezing stairs, halls, and common water closets into the narrow center of the buildings. For example, bedrooms measured 9' by 6'. Ventilation and light were meagerly provided: only four out of every 16 rooms per floor enjoyed the benefit of direct air and light.

It is difficult to imagine the degree of crowding on the Lower East Side around the turn of

^{*}Milton Hindus, The Lower East Side: Portal to American Life.

the century. Every square mile was crammed with 290,000 people by 1855. While the density of population per square mile was 73,000 for Manhattan Island in 1890, it was 234,080 in the Tenth Ward of the Lower East Side. Henry James wrote in 1904 after a visit to the area, that "with the exception of some shy corner of Asia, no district in the world known to the statistician has so many inhabitants to the yard."*

Naturally under these conditions the immigrants' overriding and motivating desire was to get out, to earn enough to move to Harlem, the Upper East or West Side, the Bronx, Brooklyn, or away altogether. It is no wonder that the turnover was so high, that success was measured by exodus, that the Lower East Side was primarily a turnstile community until about 1915.

But the tremendous number of immigrants and the miserable housing provided for them were not by any means the only reasons why the Lower East Side became--and remains--a neglected slum, a place for the poor in an affluent city. Other important reasons emerge from observing historical land use and transportation patterns.

In the beginning the Lower East Side was removed from the turmoil and confusion of an expanding and growing city. It was a proper and quiet residential area protected along much of its borders by the East River. However, by the first third of the 19th century New York City had pushed past the Lower East Side and was rapidly growing into the midtown area. Whereas once the Lower East Side was on the northern outer fringes of the city, it was now a part of downtown.

A combination of the pattern for using land, the layout and nature of the city's street system, and the technology of subway building produced an area which for practical purposes remained outside the mainstream of development for the era that opened with the 20th century.

The first subway lines followed the linear development pattern of Manhattan. They went from the concentrated employment centers below 34th Street, northward to the upper West Side, the East Side and Washington Heights. In general, the lines followed the direction of wider north-south thoroughfares which suited the technology of cut-and-fill for building subways. As a consequence, the Lower East Side was essentially bypassed as New York City's basic public transportation system matured.

For better, and also for worse, in terms of continuing city renewal, the Lower East Side has been a backwater out of the mainstream of development. For better, in the sense that the Lower East Side since the beginning of the century did not offer significant opportunities for private redevelopment. For worse, in the sense that the people living on the Lower East Side, while geographically close to the heart of the city were, in terms of getting to employment places and other centers of activity, relatively isolated for lack of transportation. To a large degree, because the area lacks an effective communications system, it has remained the home of almost two hundred thousand of New York's less affluent citizens.

For all of these reasons, once the Lower East Side became the refuge of the poor, the alien,

and the powerless, its physical destiny as a sector of the City was fixed. But up to a point the destiny of its inhabitants was not hopeless. Progressive settlement of New York, initiation and expansion of industry, and the development of cheap transportation by 1895 offered a means of escape.

In the open, developing economy, industries welcomed the new laborers. Weekly wages made mobility possible. By the end of the century alternate low-rent areas existed; as soon as they could the immigrants left the Lower East Side to change their lives. But the physical container of their early experience, the slum, did not change.

It entrapped those workers unable to leave, the least able to be gainfully employed, the most impoverished, the most disappointed. From 1915 onward those who remained confronted a gradually closing economy, with progressively fewer opportunities for unskilled workers. Those people, and the ones who have come since, face a life almost without alternatives, and suffer the apparently endless legacy of the tenements. More than half of the residents of the Lower East Side today live in tenements dating from the last century. The prospect of decent housing and job accommodations for the poor today is no more hopeful than it was a century ago when their forbears arrived.

Since the end of World War II, the remaining old and poor Jews, Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, and Italians have lived in relatively peaceful proximity to their new neighbors, Negroes and Puerto Ricans who moved into the new public housing projects and adjacent tenement blocks. Bodegas, botanicas and storefront churches sprang up beside and now often outnumber dairy stores, yeshivas, and synagogues, and are only yards away from Chinese restaurants and Italian sausage and pastry shops. Puerto Rican rather than Jewish vendors now man the shaved ice-syrup stands.

When measured against 1910, the Lower East Side seems empty of people; its population has dropped by two-thirds. Nevertheless, overcrowding as now defined (more than one person per room) exists in almost twenty percent of all housing units.

In New York City the combined population of Negroes and Puerto Ricans increased by 250 percent between 1925 and 1950. The latter 1960's have also witnessed a second great influx of Chinese immigrants, measured at almost 5,000 a year (although not all settle within the boundaries of the Lower East Side). Such an extraordinary rise compares, by percentage, to the Irish and German migration of 1840 to 1860 or to the Jewish and Italian migrations of 1890 to 1915. However, important differences obtain.

The Negro is not really a newcomer; he is returning to the Lower East Side. In the early nineteenth century, Negroes heavily populated the Five Points district. Then as the city moved northward, the Negro population followed. By 1900, the majority of Negroes lived in what is now midtown Manhattan; their next major move was north again, to Harlem.

Primarily as the consequence of low-rent public housing, Negroes began returning to the Lower East Side in appreciable numbers. On the other hand, Puerto Ricans who are relative newcomers to the community now comprise the largest national group. In several ways, conditions of their life mirror the hardships of mid-nineteenth century immigrants. Their community is begin-

*The American Scene, Bloomington, Ind., 1968, pp. 131-2.

ning to reflect a cherishing of and dependency on its distinctive culture--a dependency reminiscent of the Jewish ghetto established within the Lower East Side from 1890 to 1915.

But whereas the Jews at the turn of the century faced an economic situation offering jobs and mobility and the chance of improvement, today's new immigrants often find these opportunities denied to them. They are unprepared and dispossessed in a social and economic system that increasingly demands skills and stability. They have not yet had an educational experience such as enabled earlier immigrants to achieve economic, political, and social gains. The self-help groups that formed to cohere the Jewish and Italian communities are just beginning to emerge among Puerto Ricans. Moreover the national environment is now (partly for economic reasons) less congenial to newcomers than it was in 1870, and tends to regard strangers with distrust. In the essay cited above, Irving Howe calls the Lower East Side "a triumph of human resilience and improvisation." But these admirable qualities only flourish in an atmosphere of hope, when they can bear fruit. When such virtues patently lead nowhere, resilience becomes harshness, brutality, and indifference, while improvisation can lead to the life styles of despair and dependency.

The newest group of emigres on the Lower East Side are artists who seek cheap housing and studio space. Along with them and sometimes indistinguishable from them are the self-styled outcasts who profess to have had a surfeit of materialism and the rigidity and hypocrisy that often accompany it. Their presence has added color and life to a depressed neighborhood. Their imaginative shops and theaters are preferable to empty storefronts, but it is doubtful whether the visitors they attract stimulate the rest of the Lower East Side economy in any way. To date the visitors seem to find the

renewal of the arts--or pseudo arts--exciting, but remain oblivious to the surrounding poverty. It is too early to say what the effects of these new groups will be. Generally they do not share the imposed poverty of the area, though their quarters are far from luxurious. Thus far there has been some conflict between the new groups and older ethnic groups and Puerto Ricans. It is understandable that the older, forgotten residents and the striving Puerto Ricans would resent the newcomers, especially the latter's freedom to reject what the former have never had a chance to taste. But it is likely that the area, receptive to many changes, can continue to absorb the clash of cultures and styles. If the productive, socially sophisticated artists become concerned with and involved in the problems of the area (as they seem to be doing) their contribution to the Lower East Side can be significant.

Clearly, then, the dismal inheritance from the nineteenth century still dominates the Lower East Side: economic poverty, ethno-centered grouping, and miserable housing. For most families, and especially Puerto Ricans, Negroes, and Chinese, the future of the Lower East Side, unless radically changed by government action, is a future of continuing poverty. It is a future of tenements further deteriorating while the lives of their inhabitants deteriorate under the pressing burdens of poverty and despair.

The Lower East Side has served New York City, indeed served America, as a starting place for its immigrants, who did much to create the flourishing metropolis that the city is now. The capacity of this area and its people to absorb, to educate, to encourage spiritual strength in the face of obstacles, earned for New York its coveted reputation for tolerance and progress. It is manifestly unjust that now, having served its purpose, the Lower East Side should be sacrificed to the giant system to which it gave in abundance life and strength.

2. THE PLACE AND ITS PEOPLE

SUMMARY

Since the 19th century, when the Lower East Side was a haven for European immigrants, the area has retained the same general street pattern, physical appearance, and tenement buildings. Although it presently shares the poverty and allied problems of a ghetto community, it does not, fortunately, have the homogeneity of people and grimness of spirit of a ghetto. It is still marked by diversity, color, and cosmopolitanism, though its resident groups have changed.

The physical history of the Lower East Side has been shaped by the two primary factors of transportation and geography. The area departs from Manhattan's regular long and narrow shape, as it juts out into the East River. Major subway lines, organized in a north-south direction, have largely bypassed it, so that it has an insular quality, serving more as a corridor for travel than as a destination or a starting-point.

The Lower East Side is a distinct residential enclave, with one-third of its land used for housing--half of this in relatively new low and moderate-income projects and the other half in dilapidated tenements. Too much land is wasted in archaic streets that could be better used for new housing and open space.

The Lower East Side should remain primarily residential in the future, and should continue to provide low and moderate-income housing, but of a far better quality than it does today. Its location, accessibility, and present nature do not really render it suitable for any large-scale conversion to commerce or other uses.

While whites are still the largest population group, with 92,300 people (49 percent of the total 188,500), this group has been steadily declining at a high rate over the past 20 years, and the emerging dominant group is now Puerto Rican, with a population of 69,400 (37 percent of the total). Non-white residents (including Negroes and Chinese) measure 26,800 (14 percent) and are also increasing, but more slowly than the Puerto Rican group. In the future, a younger Puerto Rican and Chinese population will grow largely at the numerical expense of an older white population that is not replenishing itself and faces decline in the predictable cycle that old urban neighborhoods go through. Of course, there are variations to this theme: new housing, older cheap apartments, and the variety of the Lower East Side will continue to attract younger whites in the arts and professions or those seeking to bypass the strictures of society.

The new Puerto Rican arrivals are mostly poorer young families who settle in the tenements while the moderate and middle-income white residents occupy newer housing. The interests and aims of these groups are at variance and frequently clash on questions of planned change in the area. Because of ethnic and other kinds of diversity, the Lower East Side has no firm political power base or unanimity of goals from which to seek the government aid it desperately needs for rebuilding and new community services.

Moreover, the problems of the two extreme age groups, old and young, are urgent. The older white residents, from an earlier era, are increasingly engulfed by their new and different neighbors, deprived of decent housing and medical care, yet financially and emotionally unable to start a new life in better circumstances. On the other hand, the young people, whose schools are unresponsive to their needs and families often unstable, are more and more alienated and disenchanted with their prospects for a different kind of life. The quality of life for both these groups is involved with the quality of social institutions in the area: if these are improved, the prospects for both young and old can become enlarged.

Very few Lower East Side families earn enough to maintain a decent standard of living. Almost half of all households earn less than \$4,000 a year, and three-quarters earn less than \$6,000. Since the Puerto Rican families tend to be large and growing, this income level is especially difficult to manage on. Yet the Lower East Side is an important reservoir of semi-skilled and unskilled labor serving the city. Eighty percent of its working residents are employed in Manhattan and ten percent in Brooklyn. It is likely that in the future as the numbers of the poor increase (a population peak of 205,000 - 210,000 is expected between 1975 and 1980) they will be less divided by ethnic differences than united by common economic concerns and by a desire to share in the benefits of our prosperous society.

Until the mass migrations that were to make New York the pre-eminent city in the nation started in the second third of the nineteenth century, the Lower East Side was the upper limit of the city. Beyond 14th Street lay the suburban countryside and rural villages of upper Manhattan. The Bowery was a main street for shopping and entertainment. Many of the city's most distinguished families lived below Grand Street near the city's business and civic center. The area bordering the East River along South Street was devoted to shipping and the maritime trades. Fragments of this era, such as the old brick warehouses, are still visible under the latter-day imprint of highways and housing.

Starting in the 1840's, the impact of the American age of immigration and the beginning of technological change and economic development sent the early prosperous Lower East Side residents northward to other sections of Manhattan, setting in motion events which were to give the area the pattern it still bears. From other lands the new immigrants poured into the city, and many remained near where they disembarked. Jobs for the unskilled were available in the rapidly growing city. Others worked in the burgeoning sweatshops that became the hallmark of industry and penury on the Lower East Side.

Now cheap apartment tenements were built in a neighborhood that until a few years before had seen only commodious single family row houses, such as remain on East Seventh Street. The intensity of migration and the density of building fixed for the next century the destiny of the Lower East Side as a refuge of the poor. Although succeeding generations have changed its ethnic and cultural nature, the physical setting of buildings and streets has remained remarkably unaltered.

Even now, more than any other neighborhood in the city, the Lower East Side possesses a cosmopolitanism and cultural richness reflecting its past as a refuge for many national groups. Although the contemporary Lower East Side displays in abundance many of the hallmarks of the ghetto--misérable housing, high unemployment and the corrosive effects of the drug culture--it is not a total pathological ghetto in the sense of exuding an overwhelming homogeneity and pervasive grimness of spirit. Various groups have left their imprint in the form of strong and independent local institutions, such as settlement houses and churches. Its cultural, social and economic life is not dominated by any one group but combines both the legacy of the past and the reality of the present.

TRANSPORTATION AND GEOGRAPHY

The development history of the Lower East Side has been shaped by two interacting factors: transportation and geography. Roger Starr recently observed that, "The history of New York City is primarily the history of transportation." For the Lower East Side the validity of this statement is reflected in the effects of inadequate transportation. In all eras each major transportation change has terminated outside or just skirted the area. The first public stage line in Manhattan, between Bleecker Street and

and Bowling Green, ran along the western edge of the district. Later, elevated cable cars and steam railways ran along Second and Third Avenues and the Bowery. The city's first subway, the Lexington Avenue Line, was designed to bring workers and shoppers downtown from upper Manhattan and the Bronx rather than to serve the workers of the Lower East Side. Even the three bridges that were built between Brooklyn and Manhattan between 1883 and 1909 did little to bring the Lower East Side into the mainstream of development. Although the local street system was adapted to interborough travel, the Lower East Side became more of a corridor for commutation between different parts of the metropolis, rather than a destination or starting-point in itself.

Manhattan's long, narrow shape has dictated a natural path, first to the streets and later to the subways. Important streets and subway lines run parallel to each other rather than converging at one point as they do in most other cities. As Map 1, The Location of the Lower East Side, shows, the Lower East Side substantially departs from the regular pattern of the rest of Manhattan, jutting sharply out into the East River for most of its length. As a result of this geographical deviation it has remained essentially unconnected with the north-south street and transit routes.

Only one of its north-south streets, the Bowery-Third Avenue, is a through route between lower and midtown Manhattan. All the remaining north-south streets, such as Second Avenue-Chrystie Street, and First Avenue-Allen Street, are entrapped within the bulging shape of the Lower East Side. The most important east-west streets, Houston, Delancey, and Canal, are all part of the bridge and highway connecting system. Other east-west streets are of relatively minor value for intercity travel.

Connections to the dominant north-south subway lines are also absent; the nearest trunk route, the Lexington Avenue line, is upwards of a half-mile from the most populous section of the Lower East Side. As with the bridges, the subway lines that traverse the Lower East Side serve more to bring people from Brooklyn into Manhattan than to facilitate travel out of the Lower East Side.

Although at the deceptive scale of Map 1 the Lower East Side appears to be closely connected to other parts of the city, geography and transportation have conjoined to give it a rather insular position in the metropolis. This sense of isolation has led to some of the Lower East Side's most distinctive features. While geographical isolation may have nurtured social variety and cultural efflorescence, this same diversity has also hindered political maturation. At a time when neighborhoods reap benefits, be they new schools or the largesse of Model Cities grants, through concerted pressure on authorities of municipal government, the Lower East Side is at a considerable disadvantage. In an older era, when rewards were gained through local political activity, the diversity of the area was an advantage. Powerful neighborhood leaders could be swayed into acting on behalf of a variety of groups. Now, with larger and consolidated units dominating political life the Lower East Side lacks significant political power in comparison to more homogeneous sections such as Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant.



LOCATION OF THE
LOWER EAST SIDE

BASIC LAND USE FEATURES

Consistent with its insularity, the Lower East Side is a distinct residential enclave within lower Manhattan. Its upper boundary, Fourteenth Street, is the historic northern limit of the Lower East Side and a strong line of demarcation between the low and moderate-income community to the south and the middle-income district to the north. On the west, Fourth Avenue, the Bowery, and St. James Place clearly separate the Lower East Side from the main Italian and Chinese communities, and the industrial and civic districts to the west. To the south the Brooklyn Bridge is a firm boundary between the Lower East Side and the downtown business and civic sections, while on the east, the East River is the continuous border along a gently curving shoreline of parks and piers.

These boundaries embrace an area of slightly over one thousand acres. As Table I and Map 2 (Land Use) show, the Lower East Side is, as it has always been, mainly a residential area. Over one-third (34.1 percent) of its land is devoted to residences, with almost half of this in planned project housing of the low and moderate-income variety. The difference in livability between the sub-standard six-story tenements and the modern housing projects is highlighted by the difference in densities: the former have a density of about 240 apartments per acre, compared to the latter's density of almost 145 per acre. Until the 1930's, with few exceptions tenements offered the only housing accommodations on the Lower East Side. Since then about 24,000 new apartments, almost equally divided between low and moderate income, have been built in the familiar project format, changing the face of the Lower East Side and introducing an economic mixture that was not present earlier. However, economic diversity, rather than leading to social integration and mutuality of efforts, has crystallized a polarity of interests. The moderate-income housing is almost totally occupied by whites, many of them descended from the earlier immigrant groups, who seek to remake the rest of the community in an image consistent with their attainments. On the other hand, the tenements are increasingly becoming the province of the poorer newcomers, mainly Puerto Ricans and Chinese, who see their group's ambitions in terms of more low-rent apartments. Plans for new housing often evoke a clash between the two groups, one seeking community renewal and "balance" by attracting more people akin to themselves, while the other advocates better housing for those who already live here and suffer the outrages of the tenements.

The quantity of land devoted to thoroughfares is unusually high, amounting to 31.9 percent of the total area. Normally, in a high density urban area the share of land used for streets would be between 26 and 28 percent. At first inspection, the presence of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive and the bridge approaches would seem to explain the abnormally high use of land for streets. However, the paucity of streets in large housing projects tends to cancel that out. The prime reason for the excessive use of land for streets is the archaic pattern of small blocks that prevails in most of the Lower East Side, but especially in the oldest sections between Houston Street and East Broadway. As shown later, the conversion of surplus streets to usable building sites or open spaces is the most reasonable way to create "new land."

While a significant amount of land (8.5 percent) is devoted to public recreation, the usefulness of much of this space is restricted by its lo-

TABLE I
Land Use, 1969

	Number of Acres	Percent of Total Area
Residential: Projects	166.84	16.4
Other	179.73	17.7
Commercial & Industrial	91.26	9.0
Utilities & Services	9.76	.9
Schools & Institutions	57.88	5.7
Parks & Recreation	86.79	8.5
Thoroughfares	323.59	31.9
Parking	7.86	.8
Land In Development	50.35	5.0
Vacant Land	6.36	.6
Vacant Buildings	15.02	1.5
Water	20.46	2.0
Total	1,015.90	100.0

Source: Consultants' measurements

cation and the difficulty of access. For example, the largest single open space, East River Park, lies along the edge of the community and is effectively divided from it by a major highway. Considering the number of people who are crammed into the area and the importance of open space as a relief from the oppressiveness of buildings and streets, the provision of additional park land is a major task for rebuilding. Traditional open space standards have little meaning in a densely settled area like the Lower East Side. A more sensible approach would be to gain additional play space by closing streets, replacing neglected park space with more useful sites near housing, and filling in land along the shore to create large new park spaces.

For a residential quarter of a large city, the amount of land devoted to commerce and industry (9.0 percent) is comparatively high. In fact, the actual intensity of this use is understated, since shops in residential buildings are designated as secondary uses and are excluded from the tabulations. Considering its level of local employment and location, the Lower East Side has a proliferated commercial structure: many buildings, mostly small and old, are occupied by individual enterprises with few employees. This situation is most pronounced in the blocks south of Delancey Street, where over half of the land used by commerce and industry is situated. Rebuilding, especially in this area, cannot seriously be approached without a logical plan for commercial and industrial resettlement.

Five percent (50 acres) of the total land area, designated as "Land In Development," is committed to housing projects that are in execution or planning. The largest of these are two urban renewal projects: Seward Park Extension and Two Bridges. In addition there are several smaller sites slated for development over the next few years through the vest-pocket housing program.

Only about six acres of land can be classified as vacant, meaning that it has been vacant for a period of time and there are no plans for it. Because it consists of small scattered parcels (a typical piece is 25 feet by 100 feet, the plot from a razed tenement), this land is of marginal value. A more important resource may be the 15 acres occupied by vacant buildings--old-law tenements and commercial buildings. Again, diffusion of these sites prevents their being assembled for rebuilding, although a number of them may be suitable candidates for rehabilitation.

The 20 acres of water represent river beds and pier areas within the bulkhead line that could be reclaimed for recreation and residential use.

Although the basic residential aspect of the Lower East Side will endure, long-range plans for change, as described in the next chapter, will produce some significant rearrangements in the magnitude and distribution of land uses.

ROLE IN THE FUTURE

The Lower East Side will remain a residential district for the foreseeable future. It has great potential, through its location, history, and cultural richness, to become a very desirable place to live. The persistence of the past and the presence of nearly two hundred thousand people will be very strong reasons for maintaining and recreating it as a residential neighborhood. Moreover, there is no economic market for the substantial new activities that would be required to reshape the community. The Lower East Side does not have the proximity to other areas and the locational attributes that have recently been the impetus for change in more well-positioned parts of the borough. The huge and growing investment in new public and moderate-rental housing and in the community structure of schools, parks, and services, militates against sweeping shifts in basic function. Scheduled new investments will confirm the residential role of the neighborhood.

At first glance the Lower East Side appears to enjoy an enviable proximity to downtown and midtown business and residential sections such as would gladden any developer. However, this propinquity is considerably vitiated by geography and the perils of inadequate transportation that in practice make it difficult to reach these areas. Thus, while real estate developers have often coveted this superficial proximity, only certain fringe sections, such as parts of the Bowery, Second and Third Avenues, Chatham Square, and along Fourteenth Street, offer the locational attractions (e.g., transit, shopping, other comparable development) sought by private investors. Considering the city's housing situation (even in the luxury market) and the need for tax revenue, pressure for private development will be exerted in these areas over the next decade. Some high-rent housing will be built and middle-income will also appear. Development of this type should be confined to these specified points, some now rather marginally used, along the border of the Lower East Side, where displacement of the existing residents can be kept to a minimum and the transit and locational advantages sought are obtainable.

The large interior sections of the Lower East Side should be rebuilt for its contemporary population. Considering the present real estate market, the prevailing zoning densities and the plans for new transit service, the great bulk of the community does not seem to be endangered by private development of a kind that will drive out the present residents.

There is a market for some business growth in the Lower East Side. The lower Bowery, East Broadway, and the area near Canal Street might be suitable for new commercial and industrial space, as well as for "back office" space for downtown businesses.

The economic role of the Lower East Side also supports the goal of keeping it as a residence for the working class. The Lower East Side is intimately connected with Manhattan's extensive

and varied economic structure. In 1963, 80 percent of the job holders living in the Lower East Side worked in Manhattan, and another ten percent worked in Brooklyn. Almost four out of ten members of the labor force had service, clerical, or sales jobs, occupations that are highly concentrated in Manhattan. Almost three out of ten were operatives or laborers, categories that also show an affinity for Manhattan.

Lower East Side residents work in the downtown and midtown business sections and the manufacturing area between Canal and 34th Streets, with a large number employed in the west side loft and garment districts. Working-class people with modest skills need the wide range of employment choices and the transit services (although on the Lower East Side transit is hardly ideal) that a central urban district can provide. As in the past, the Lower East Side is still an important reservoir for the unskilled and semi-skilled labor pool that Manhattan needs. Although changes in the city's economic structure (as described later) are weakening the functional link between the Lower East Side and the rest of Manhattan, the occupational dependence between the two areas is still very strong and must be respected as rebuilding proceeds.

Aside from questions of marketability and appropriateness, plans for transforming the Lower East Side from a low and moderate-income community would confront the immediate problem of relocation and the more encompassing issue of city housing and rebuilding policy. New York is suffering from a paralysis, commonly called a "crisis," in all facets of housing--insufficient new construction, soaring construction costs, erosion of the existing supply, to name but a few aspects--that make it unacceptable and indeed inhuman to sacrifice the housing of one group to benefit another. It would be inconceivable to consider a major rebuilding effort for the Lower East Side that would permanently displace the present residents, until the city had enough new housing (measured in hundreds of thousands of apartments) to accommodate the residents who would lose their homes. If new ventures, such as Battery Park City, which will offer several thousand low-rent apartments on "new land," can be used to absorb the relocation from the Lower East Side, then use of some of the released land for satisfying other housing demands would be tenable.

THE PEOPLE

POPULATION TRENDS

The Lower East Side is the only neighborhood in Manhattan below East Harlem that is committed to accommodating the poor. It has played this role for the last century, and if current trends are maintained it should remain so.

The trends that still cast it in this position are strong and self-sustaining. Chinese immigration was fostered by legislative changes in the mid 1960's and the new arrivals gravitated to the existing centers of Chinese life. Next to San Francisco's Chinatown, New York's is the largest in the nation and attracts about one quarter of the 20,000 Chinese immigrants who enter the United States each year. Although the mercantile and "tourist" heart of Chinatown is just outside of the Lower East Side, one of the prime areas for residential settlement is east of the Bowery below Grand Street. Chinese families will continue coming into the Lower East Side (In 1968 they already accounted for 15 percent of public school enrollments as against 10 percent for whites) and generate housing, educational, and public service needs that will be among the most imperative facing the community in the next two decades.

Although the rate of growth among the Puerto Rican population has abated since the 1950's, the absolute growth is still large, averaging two thousand persons a year during the last decade. The Puerto Rican group has put down important economic roots in the community: many of the smaller neighborhood businesses are owned by Puerto Ricans, and a Puerto Rican middle class of small businessmen, civil servants and skilled workers is emerging. Although Puerto Rican cultural, civic, religious and social life is asserting itself in a variety of ways, the Puerto Ricans have yet to translate their numbers and other gains into significant political power. In the public housing projects and the newer cooperatives a stable Puerto Rican tenantry has formed (the 5,500 Puerto Rican families in public housing have lived there for an average of seven years) who are becoming more firmly committed to the Lower East Side. Well-established in the community, the Puerto Ricans can be expected to emerge as the dominant population group. Hopefully this numerical strength will be matched with concomitant local political strength and resources.

On the other hand, the white community will keep contracting as a result of continued pressure from incoming Puerto Ricans and more recently Chinese, and the natural demographic tendencies associated with a mature, relatively static populace. White residents of public housing and the moderate-income projects will tend to remain, while middle-aged and elderly whites now living in the tenements keep declining in numbers. Most white growth will be among single people and young couples without school-age children, who will seek new or rehabilitated buildings. White enrollment in the public schools has been declining steadily until only one in ten primary school students is now white. If this trend is any portent for the future, the Lower East Side cannot expect to attract white families with school-age children except in public housing, and, to a limited degree, in moderate-rent apartments.

The only way in which the Lower East Side could counter these strong forces and attract large numbers of white families of moderate and middle income would be by a major transformation of the community that would fulfill the expectations these people have for a living place. However, the prevailing political climate and the lack of accommodations to which tenement dwellers could move precludes such action on the scale that would be necessary to change basic population shifts. Certainly, a reasonable portion of the new housing on the Lower East Side must be for families of moderate income. Fifteen percent of the apartments in the

first stage of the vest-pocket rebuilding program are moderate-income. This share should expand in subsequent phases. Such a mixture will permit the interchange between neighborhoods that is vital to the city's experience, and provide housing for the new middle class that will emerge from groups more recently arrived in the Lower East Side. For it the enveloping despair of the racial ghetto is to be avoided, the Lower East Side must strive to maintain a mixture of ethnic and economic groups. If rebuilding and change are accompanied by the destructive isolation of a racial and class ghetto, the Lower East Side will have relinquished one of its historic attributes.

RECENT DIRECTIONS OF CHANGE

After a century and a quarter of serving newcomers, the Lower East Side is now host to five distinct population groups. Each group can be characterized by age*, ethnic affiliation, and income**. An outline typology of these groups for 1970 would look something like this:

Low-income Young and Older Puerto Rican, Negro and Chinese Households. An estimated 25 to 30,000 of the almost 70,000 households in the Lower East Side are in this category. About one-third reside in public housing while the rest live in the tenements that still abound on the Lower East Side. These households invariably earn less than \$6,000 a year but have the largest families. In the last two decades this group has grown enormously from about 7,000 families until it is now the dominant and most dynamic population group on the Lower East Side. The newcomers are younger than the whites they displace and replace, have larger families when they enter and are more likely to add to their families while on the Lower East Side. The influx of these families is essentially responsible for the recent dramatic changes in the Lower East Side, from a community of older and middle-aged whites to one of younger non-whites and Puerto Ricans. As will be shown later, these changes have ramified into all aspects of communal life, from the public schools, to health care, to earning a living. As this group is still growing, while others are diminishing, their economic and social needs and political expression will command considerable attention in the future.

Moderate-income Younger and Older Puerto Rican, Negro and Chinese Households. This groups numbers not more than 6,000 households but represents a new, growing middle-class co-existing with the established white populace. These households live in the cooperatives, public housing (favored by households) and rehabilitated tenements. Earning a decent income for these households often means having two wage-earners.

*As age is used it generally refers to the following groups: "young" includes 20 to 35 years; "older," 35 to 45; "middle-aged," 45 to 65; and "elderly" over 65.

**Low-income covers households earning less than \$4,000 annually, although for households of four and over it would go up to \$6,000. Moderate income for most households would bridge the gap between low income and about \$8,000, although for larger households \$10,000 a year would be moderate. Middle-income would run from \$8,000 to \$10,000 up to \$12,000 or \$15,000 a year.

Moderate and Middle-Income Older and Middle-Aged White Households. Most of the estimated 10,000 families in this category live in the rental and cooperative housing projects that have been built on the Lower East Side over the last four decades. Older developments, such as Hillman Houses, are dominated by Jewish families with parents 45 years and over, while the newer ones are leavened with younger families. Most of the families in this group earn moderate incomes of over \$6,000 a year. As are the younger new arrivals, these households (and the planned precincts they live in) are an expression of community change. They have been attracted into the Lower East Side or out of its tenements by the new housing that was built to replace the slums that sheltered previous generations. Although many of these households have durable attachments to the community the group is not expected to expand and may gradually decline as they age and go unreplaced. Few white families with reasonable incomes and school-age children remain in the tenements and such families are not likely to move into an area that has been changing the way the Lower East Side has.

Low-Income, Middle-Aged and Elderly White Households. This class of about 20,000 households represents the residual "ethnic" population of the Lower East Side: people who have remained from the decades before 1950 when the area was almost totally white. They are poor, the households are small, and almost half are headed by elderly people. Although almost one-fifth of them live in public housing, the majority remain in the tenements, from which they are likely to be driven or simply disappear as change and rebuilding proceed on the Lower East Side.

Moderate and Middle-Income Younger White Households. These people are the newest arrivals to the Lower East Side: young white families without school-age children, who have been attracted by the housing values, the rea-

sonably convenient location, and the traditional vitality of the neighborhood. While older white families have fled or have been replaced, these younger households have responded to the difficult but promising life that the Lower East Side offers. The estimated 6 to 8,000 households in this group live in tenements, the more attractive older buildings west of Avenue A, and the newer cooperatives, such as Masaryk Towers. Most gains that the white population achieves in the future will be among this group.

An examination of the data on population and ethnicity for the last two decades (Table 2) reveals several strong directions of change that explain the ascendancy and decline of the five groups characterized above. The total population of the Lower East Side declined from almost 216,000 in 1950 to about 190,000 in 1970, a loss of about thirteen percent. This modest total change masked more momentous shifts within ethnic groups. From a low and moderate-income white neighborhood in 1950, twenty years later the Lower East Side has come to be shared about equally by a white population mixed along economic and age lines, and a variety of younger minority groups. The white population contracted by almost 100,000 to less than half its 1950 total. Non-whites (including Negroes and Chinese) expanded by 15,000 from a small base. But 56,000 Puerto Ricans were added to the population, a gain of over 400 percent.

The basic direction of change was firmly set in the 1950's. The succeeding decade merely extended, although at a slower rate, features of change that were already strong. Total population only decreased by 2.9 percent in the 1960's as against 10.2 percent in the preceding decade. Whites declined by 38 percent in the 1950's, but only by 21 percent in the 1960's. In the opposite direction, the Puerto Rican population grew by 271 percent in the 1950's and only 37 percent in the next decade. Although the non-white population grew by about

TABLE 2
Population and Ethnicity, 1950, 1960, and 1970

1950	White	Non-White (a)	Puerto Rican	Total
Number	190,248	12,024	13,690	215,692
Percent	88	6	6	100
1960				
Number	117,121	25,813	50,837	193,771
Percent	60	13	27	100
1970				
Number	92,300	26,800	69,400	188,500
Percent	49	14	37	100
Change 1950-1970				
Number	-97,948	+14,776	+55,710	-27,192
Percent	-51	+123	+407	-12.6

(a) Includes both Negro and Chinese

Source: 1950 and 1960 from U.S. Census of Population. 1970 from various city agencies and consultant's estimates.

TABLE 4

Resident Births by Ethnicity, 1958-1968

Year	White		Non-White		Puerto Rican		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
1958	1,399	32.5	729	16.9	2,178	50.6	4,306
1959	1,216	29.8	640	15.7	2,229	54.9	4,085
1960	1,095	27.7	639	16.2	2,216	56.1	3,950
1961	1,044	26.7	632	16.2	2,233	57.1	3,909
1962	969	26.1	643	17.3	2,101	56.6	3,713
1963	964	25.8	676	17.4	2,129	56.8	3,769
1964	927	25.5	706	19.4	2,006	55.1	3,639
1965	944	27.4	719	20.8	1,785	51.8	3,448
1966	887	26.6	644	19.3	1,803	54.1	3,334
1967	921	28.4	665	20.5	1,654	51.0	3,240
1968	1,012	32.2	578	18.4	1,554	49.9	3,144
Change 1958-1968	-387	-26.6	-151	-20.7	-624	-28.7	-1,162 (-27.0%)

Source: New York City Department of Health

TABLE 5

Resident Births, Population and School Enrollments
by Ethnicity, 1960-1970

	Percent		Puerto Rican	Total
	White	Non-White		
Total Population 1960	60	13	27	100
Resident Births 1960	28	16	56	100
Public School Enrollment 1962	20	26 (a)	54	100
Total Population 1970	49	14	37	100
Resident Births 1968	32	19	49	100
Public School Enrollment 1968	10	26*	62	100

(a) Includes about 10 percent Chinese in 1962 and 15 percent in 1968.

Source: U.S. Census, New York City Department of Health, and consultant's estimates.

one thousand persons between 1960 and 1970, the Negro share declined slightly as the Chinese proportion of non-whites grew by several thousand. This decline in the Negro population is consistent with the findings on school enrollments reported in a later chapter.

Shifts in ethnic composition are further revealed by changes in public housing occupancy over the twenty years. Five public housing projects built between 1948 and 1953 had 6 and 78 percent of their 5,500 apartments occupied by Puerto Ricans and "others" (white and Chinese) respectively at their dates of initial occupancy. By 1969 this percentage had shifted to 44 and 35 percent respectively; over a seven-fold increase in Puerto Rican occupancy and over a fifty percent decline in "other" tenancy. The decline in whites is even more startling as a reasonable share of the "others," were, by 1969, Chinese families.

A display of the changes within key age groups for the three decade years confirms the earlier assertions. Table 3 shows the largest percent loss in the middle-aged group (ages 45 - 64), which experienced a decline of 27.6 percent over the twenty years. The largest numerical contraction was in the combined young and older age groups (20 - 44), where a loss of over 22,000 people was sustained. Gains were registered at the ends of the scale: the elderly population grew by 12.8 percent, and the school-age group (ages 6 to 19) by over 20 percent.

TABLE 3
Population Distribution by Age Group
1950, 1960, and 1970

Age Group	Percent			Change 1950-1970
	1950	1960	1970	
0-5 years	11.1	11.9	12.5	-1.3
6-19	15.4	22.3	21.1	+20.5
20-44	39.9	33.0	34.0	-25.5
45-64	24.2	21.2	20.0	-27.6
65 years and over	9.4	11.6	12.4	+15.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	-12.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population and consultant's estimates.

Additions to the school-age population, composed mostly of Puerto Rican and Chinese youngsters, will produce the anticipated peaks in elementary and middle-school enrollment within the next few years. The exodus in the 20 to 64 age groups has been composed of whites, although in the 20-44 category the decrease among whites has been considerably larger than 25.5 percent, since many of the incoming Puerto Ricans and non-whites are in this group and replace departing whites. It is only among the elderly that whites--as a reminder of the area's history--predominate. However, this too will tend to change in the future; between 1960 and 1970 the non-white and Puerto Rican elderly population is estimated to have grown from 8 to 15 percent of all elderly people, and was responsible for about half of the actual numerical gain among the elderly. By 1975 they are projected to compose over 20 percent of the elderly population.

Between 1958 and 1968 the total number of resident births on the Lower East Side decreased by 27 percent, from 4,306 to 3,144. Within the decade the shares of each ethnic group remained relatively stable. Puerto Ricans accounted for about 11 of 20 births, whites for 5 out of 20, and non-whites for the remainder. The most noticeable changes have been the slight upsurge in the share of non-white births since the early 1960's and the jump in white births between 1966 and 1968. In the former case the increase, coming at a time when the total non-white population was only growing by one thousand, reflects the influx of younger Chinese families into the Lower East Side since 1961. The gain in the white share is a result of the recent entry of younger white families into older housing and new cooperatives.

Gross birth rates reveal some interesting facts about population patterns. The birth rate (resident births per 1000 residents) for whites went from 9/1000 in 1960 to 11/1000 in 1968 (using 1970 population estimates as a base), paralleling the modest gain in younger white families. For non-whites the rate was more or less stable. However, the Puerto Rican birth rate dropped drastically from 44/1000 in 1960 to 23/1000 in 1968, during a time when the Puerto Rican population was growing by almost half. One explanation is that the main impetus behind the population gain was continued Puerto Rican in-migration into the Lower East Side rather than natural increase among existing residents.

Several basic facts about the Lower East Side's population composition can be deduced from the material in Table 5. Among whites and Puerto Ricans the gap between total population and public school enrollment in the late 1960's is very wide, but in different directions. In the late 1960's whites composed only one-tenth of the public school enrollment but were almost half of the total population, evidence of older households with few school-age children. The inordinate gap in 1968 between white resident births and school enrollment is probably due to their greater use of parochial schools. On the other hand, Puerto Ricans with only 37 percent of the total population account for 62 percent of enrollments. In this case the younger households with large numbers of school children explain the "over-representation" among the school population. The situation for non-whites is analogous to that of Puerto Ricans; school enrollments for both periods are about twice their share of the total population.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLDS

It is estimated that as of 1970, there are 69,100 households living on the Lower East Side, distributed as follows by ethnic group:

TABLE 6
Households by Ethnic Group, 1970

Households	Number	Percent	Average Size
White	44,000	64	2.1
Non-white	7,300	10	3.7
Puerto Rican	17,800	26	3.9
Total	69,100	100	2.7

White households are small, an average of 2.1 persons, and therefore dominate the household proportions beyond their number, composing 64 percent of all households. At the other extreme Puerto Ricans, whose households average 3.9 persons, represent 37 percent of the population but only 26 percent of the households.

Tables 7 and 8 present some interesting information on household income (for primary families and unrelated individuals for 1963-64), cross-tabulated by age of the head of the household and the size of the household. Almost half (47 percent) of all households earned less than \$5,000 annually and about half were near or below the poverty threshold.* Slightly more than one-quarter of the households earned between \$4,000 and \$6,000 annually, and exactly one-quarter had incomes above \$6,000. If adequacy of income is measured against the actual cost of maintaining a decent standard of

*A 1961 sample survey by Mobilization for Youth covering 55 percent of the population in the Lower East Side found that one-third of the families had a gross income of less than \$55 a week (\$2860 a year).

living in New York City, rather than the artificial "poverty thresholds" cherished by government agencies, most of the households on the Lower East Side do not earn a sufficient income.

Comparable percentages for the three income groups in 1959 were 56, 22, and 23 percent respectively (in constant dollars). During the four years the distribution of income improved slightly, mainly as a result of the movement from the lowest income group to the intermediate category.

Households headed by an elderly person, over 80 percent of which are white, were much more likely to have low incomes: about three-quarters of them earned less than \$4,000 a year and most received even less than this meager amount.

Households headed by an older person (35-44) were in the best position—40 percent earned over \$6,000 a year. However, the fact that these are prime earning years for working-class men is diluted by two conditions: the group is small in relation to the older groups, and a number of these households are headed by women,

TABLE 7

Age of Head of Household by Income, 1963

Percentage of Households

Age Group of Household Head	Annual Income Group			Total
	Less than \$4,000	\$4,000 to \$6,000	\$6,000 and over	
19-34	11	10	4	25
35-44	8	6	9	23
45-64	13	10	10	33
65 and over	15	2	2	19
Total	47	28	25	100

Source: Tri-State Transportation Commission, Home Interview Survey, 1963-64.

TABLE 8

Size of Household by Income Group, 1963

Percentage of Households

Persons in Household	Annual Income Group			Total
	Less than \$4,000	\$4,000 to \$6,000	\$6,000 and over	
1	17	7	3	27
2	15	6	7	28
3 and 4	10	10	11	31
5 or more	5	5	4	14
Total	47	28	25	100

Source: Tri-State Transportation Commission, Home Interview Survey, 1963-64

reducing the potential for steady income gains. In the youngest household head group (19-34) 85 percent of the households earned less than \$6,000 annually and about 45 percent earned less than \$4,000 a year. Many of the households headed by women (22 percent of all households) are in this low income and age category, as are young men beginning to work but trapped in an unskilled, unpromising job while having a growing family to support. Although the large middle-age group (45-64) is more evenly distributed across the income range, the lowest category predominates, reflecting the unskilled occupations and low-paying industries that capture many of the household heads on the Lower East Side.

Both small and large households are common: 27 percent of all households had only one person, and 14 percent had five or more members. The smallest households are mainly white: middle-aged and elderly people, and young newcomers. Almost 9 out of 10 of these small households earned less than \$6,000 annually. Large households (5 or more persons) are mainly Puerto Rican and non-white, and are evenly distributed among all the income groups. Households of 3 and 4 persons, the most common group, are generally in the most favorable income position: two-thirds earned over \$4,000 a year. Although larger households have a similar share in the higher brackets, they also have more people to support.

SOCIAL INDICATORS

To enumerate the lower east side's social problems does not give a comprehensive understanding of the quality of life in the area. Indeed, many of the social problems that exist here--unemployment, juvenile delinquency, drug addiction--are also found in neighborhoods that are not considered slums. What makes the Lower East Side different is the very concentration of ills, which is itself an additional evil. It is the pervasive air of squalor which nurtures social problems and pathologies and creates that environment generally described as a slum.

Certain factors are most often used as indices of the degree of social problems. These include unemployment rates, education and income levels, the incidence of juvenile delinquency and narcotics use, and the extent of public assistance. Data on these social indicators, plus related statistics on housing conditions, also serve to illustrate and at least partially explain the interrelated phenomena of the slum environment.

Unemployment

In 1960 the unemployment rate for Lower East Side males 14 years and over was 9.4 percent, as shown on Table 9, almost twice as high as the city-wide figure and 35 percent higher than the borough rate. According to Table 10 the greatest unemployment was found in Health Area 65 (see the map of Health Areas below), where the rate was 15.8 percent. A rate of 13.0 percent was recorded in adjacent Health Area 74. The non-white and Puerto Rican population in these areas was 28.6 and 47.6 respectively. In general, the areas with the highest unemployment rates were those with the greatest population of non-white and Puerto Rican residents and, not surprisingly, the worst housing. Unemployment rates were lower than the Lower East Side average in those sections with better low and middle-income housing, particularly along the river.

Income Level

In 1960 there was a greater proportion of Lower East Side families with incomes under \$3,000 than in the population of the borough or the entire city: 32 percent for the area compared to 22 percent for Manhattan and 15 percent for the city.

As might be expected, the Health Areas with the highest percentage of poor families coincide to a great extent with the areas of greatest unemployment. A large number of low-income families, however, are also found in areas where public housing is concentrated. In these areas under-employment is often a problem. In the Health Area that includes Vladeck and several buildings of LaGuardia Houses, 35.6 percent of the family incomes were less than \$3,000 even though the unemployment rate was only 4.7, the lowest in the Lower East Side. In addition to the presence of several middle-income developments, close to 20 percent of the population was aged 65 and over and, therefore, not considered part of the labor force.

In Health Area 74 to the west, where 36 percent of the families earned less than \$3,000 a year, the unemployment rate is 13 percent, the second highest in the Lower East Side. In this section even the presence of the middle-income Seward Park Houses is not sufficient to offset the extreme poverty and unemployment of a population that is almost half non-white and Spanish-speaking. Only 12.6 percent of the population was elderly in this area. Health Area 78, including the middle-income Knickerbocker Village, has the lowest percentage of families under \$3,000 (26.3 percent), which is still higher than the borough and city-wide rates.



LOWER EAST SIDE HEALTH AREAS

Education Level

The low income level and high unemployment rates are closely related to the low education level of most Lower East Side residents. Table 9 shows that over three quarters of the 1960 population of 25 years and over (78.5 percent) had less than a high school education. Again, this figure is higher than the borough and city-wide rates (57.6 and 62.6 percent). In Health Area 74, the one with the highest rate of low income families, 86.5 percent of the adults never attended high school. Predictably, the areas with the lowest education level are those with the greatest percentage of non-white and Puerto Rican residents.

Public Assistance

As expected, the high proportion of low income families generates a great need for public assistance. In 1967, 162 out of every 1,000 Lower East Side residents were receiving some kind of financial assistance. That can be contrasted with 95/1,000 borough wide and 89.5/1,000 city-wide. In densely populated Health Area 67, the rate was as high as 288.3/1,000. The section with the lowest proportion of welfare recipients, Health Area 62, the northwest corner of the Lower East Side, still has a rate of 95.6/1,000, higher than either the borough or city-wide figures.

Narcotics Use

While drug abuse is clearly a phenomenon not limited to low-income groups, its toll is more severe in low-income areas. Three out of four drug users in New York City were reported to be non-white or Puerto Rican. The Lower East Side Health District ranked seventh in the city and fifth in the borough on the basis of opiate users per 1,000 persons between the ages of 15 and 44. Within the district, the Ninth Precinct, covering the area from East Houston to 14th Street between Broadway and the East River, was the fourth highest of the city's 89 precincts for narcotics arrests in 1969. Excluding those portions of the health district north of 14th Street, almost 52 out of every thousand Lower East Side residents between the ages of 15 and 44 were narcotics users. This is actually slightly lower than the borough rate (58.4 per 1,000), but significantly higher than the city-wide figure of 22.9 per 1,000.

Within the Lower East Side, opiate use was estimated to be greatest (75.3 per 1,000) in Health Area 67, southeast of Tompkins Square Park. This section also reported a high rate of unemployment and the greatest proportion of families receiving public assistance. In Health Area 74, which, like 67, contains a great number of deteriorating tenement units, the rate was 64.4 per 1,000. Here again, drug use coincided with low incomes and high unemployment. On the other hand, Health Area 62, northwest of Tompkins Square Park, also reported a high rate of narcotics use, but had the lowest incidence of financial aid. This section is one favored by large numbers of hippies and other young people who make freer use of drugs than does the general population. The housing here also tends to be better.

Drug use was reported to be lowest in Health Areas 78 and 80, the section along the East River which includes seven low and middle-income housing projects. Although family incomes are low here and a large number of persons receive public assistance, drug use is substantially less. The two mitigating factors may be that these sections have the least unemployment and some of the best housing available in the Lower East Side.

Juvenile Delinquency

This factor has only limited significance as a social indicator because it provides only quantitative data which may not be accurate. Statistics on juvenile delinquency, for example, only report the number of offenses, with no differentiation between various types. Nevertheless, gross rates do provide some indication of the comparative position of the Lower East Side.

For youths between the ages of 7 and 20 the Lower East Side reported 77.4 offenders per 1,000 in 1968. The city-wide rate was 64.5 per 1,000 and the borough rate 76.9/1,000. Health Area 67, with the highest rate of opiate use and the greatest proportion of welfare occupants, also had the highest percentage of juvenile offenders, more than 115 for every 1,000 youths. Other sections reporting high delinquency rates were Health Areas 62 and 65, neighborhoods favored by young hippie types. These three sections, all covered by the Ninth Precinct, also had the greatest incidence of drug use. The

TABLE 9

Comparative Social Indicators

	<u>Lower East Side</u>	<u>Manhattan</u>	<u>New York City</u>
Percent of Families with Annual Incomes Under \$3,000 (1960)	32.0	22.0	15.0
Unemployment, Males over 14 (1960)	9.4	6.9	5.0
Less than High School Education 25 years and over (1960)	78.5	57.6	62.6
Narcotics Use per 1,000, ages 15 to 44 (1967)	51.8	58.4	22.9
Financial Assistance per 1,000 People (1967)	162.2	95.1	89.5
Juvenile Delinquency per 1,000, ages 7 to 20 (1968)	77.4	76.9	64.5
Out-of-Wedlock Births per 100 Live Births (1967)	27.0	25.6	16.7

Source: Some Demographic and Social Characteristics of the Horizon Project Area,
Institute for Social Research, Fordham University, June, 1970.

TABLE 10

Selected Social Indicators by Health Area

	<u>Health Areas</u>								
	<u>62</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>80</u>
Percent of Families with Annual Income under \$3,000 (1960)	28.0	31.0	30.3	29.2	34.1	35.6	32.5	26.3	35.6
Unemployment Rate of Males 14 Years and over (1960)	11.0	8.6	15.8	7.6	10.1	13.0	7.8	5.9	4.7
Population 25 years and over with less than High School Education (1960)	74.7	78.8	75.2	76.9	81.8	86.5	76.2	78.1	78.2
Narcotics Use per 1,000, 15 to 44 Years, (1967)	63.5	49.5	58.8	55.4	75.3	64.4	47.8	22.5	28.6
Financial Assistance per 1,000 Total Population (1967)	95.6	212.3	126.1	126.0	288.3	142.0	173.4	123.8	172.3
Juvenile Delinquency per 1,000, 7 to 20 years (1968)	91.4	98.0	74.3	65.4	115.4	44.1	70.2	82.6	55.6

Source: Some Demographic and Social Characteristics of the Horizon Project Area, Institute for Social Research, Fordham University, June, 1970.

data in these two categories, therefore, may also reflect the particular precinct's arrest enforcement policies. The low delinquency rates in Health Areas 74 (44.1 per 1,000) and 80 (55.6 per 1,000) may be a result of the fact that a large portion of the youthful population in these areas are residents of the middle-income projects--Seward Park, Corlears Hook, and Gouverneur Gardens.

Despite the overall incidence of severe social problems, there are variations among different areas of the Lower East Side. Generally speaking, the hard-core, multi-problem sections, Health Areas 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, and 74, lie north of Grand Street, with the exception of the tenement district west of Seward Park Houses. The fact that the three Health Areas, 76, 78, and 80, containing the band of project housing along the East River, are less burdened with problems, is probably the result of a combination of factors. For one thing, the Housing Authority's selection procedure automatically reduces the number of residents with chronic social problems, thus producing a more stable population. Unemployment rates are lower here despite the fact that the percentage of low-income families is as high as in the surrounding non-project areas.

Although the effect of housing on the incidence of social problems cannot be denied, neither housing, nor poverty, nor ethnic background can be the sole determining factor for any category of problem. For example, the concentration of large numbers of non-white and Latin residents in depressed tenement blocks plagued with high unemployment and widespread juvenile delinquency and narcotics use may well be a result of the inability of these people to find better housing rather than a cause of the problems. Moreover, in Health Area 62, where three-quarters of the population is white, the extent of drug use was more than twice that of Health Area 78, with a population 43 percent non-white and Latin. And in Health Area 80, where 172.3 persons out of 1,000 received assistance and 35.6 percent of the families had incomes under \$3,000 (the highest for any health area), both narcotics use and unemployment are lower than in any

other area. Although poverty is a powerful depressant, the lack of motivation, hope, and incentive resulting from the oppressive atmosphere of the tenements is an obstacle no less significant. In short, it is the combination of factors that together make a slum environment and produce the appalling rates of social problems discussed here.

PROJECTED POPULATION

Population projections are generally hazardous, but are especially so for an area with the dynamism and diversity of forces found on the Lower East Side. Nevertheless, some statements regarding the people who will be living in the community in the near future can be made. It is estimated that 198,700 people will live there by 1975, a gain of 10,700 above the 1970 figure.

TABLE 11

Population and Ethnic Group, 1975

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
White	87,300	44
Non-white	31,800	16
Puerto Rican	78,600	40
Total	198,700	100

An increase in population runs counter to the recent events which have brought a steady decline over the past six decades. Two identifiable factors will reverse this trend and result in a gain of slightly over five percent between 1970 and 1975. New housing to be built through urban renewal, the vest-pocket housing program, and other programs, on land now substantially vacant, will accommodate about 20,000 people. Balanced against this will be a loss of existing units housing 14,000 persons, as a result of relocation for new housing and community ser-

vices, building abandonments, and emergency situations. The net result will be a gain of 5,000 people. The remaining share of the net gain in population will be accounted for by the continued influx of Chinese into the blocks below Grand Street, which are already becoming a residential extension of the core of Chinatown. Rather than displacing other groups, it is assumed that many of the Chinese will continue to come to an area where they already are entrenched. Overcrowding and "doubling up" will be more common in this population shift than in similar recent changes. It should be noted that reliable information about the recent changes in the Chinese population are very difficult to obtain. Even the results of the 1970 Census will not reveal the full extent of the shifts, due to problems of enumeration.

Forceful and durable trends will continue altering the ethnic composition and hence the household and age balance of the Lower East Side. Negro population will continue to decline slightly as it has over the last few years. (Statistically, however, this decrease will be hidden by gains in the Chinese component of the non-white population.) As a result of continued in-migration and natural increase, the Puerto Rican share of the population will expand from an estimated 37 percent in 1970 to 40 percent in 1975. The white population will keep declining, although the loss will be less than would otherwise occur because new apartments, such as the Seward Park Extension Urban Renewal Project, will attract new whites and retain certain portions of the present population.

Considering the demographic forces that are active on the Lower East Side and the course that community rebuilding is likely to take, with its stress on apartments for families of low and moderate income, Puerto Ricans will become the dominant group on the Lower East Side by 1980. The non-white component will also expand, but the increase will be attributable to the entry of Chinese, rather than growth among the Negro population. Whites will continue to decline in numbers, especially among middle-aged and elderly households. Although the convenience and vitality of the Lower East Side, as well as the prospects of decent housing in new cooperatives, rehabilitated buildings or expensive apartment towers, will attract young white households without school-age children, the continued exodus of older white families will more than balance this selective entry.

Sometime between 1975 and 1980 the Lower East Side will reach a population peak of between 205 and 210 thousand people. At this point all buildable vacant land will have been used and the two large pending urban renewal projects, which have few on-site families, will be completed. Subsequent large-scale rebuilding of the dense tenement sections will cause a loss of population and housing units, since tenement blocks with 240 families to the acre will be replaced with modern buildings housing about 165 families to the acre. However, as detailed in the next chapters, if additional land now devoted to streets and shoreline areas is used for housing, even while the tenement blocks are rebuilt at lower densities, the number of dwelling units can eventually be kept at 66,000, which is close to its present level of about 69,000. But this number would not be attained until the reconstruction program is completed; at intermediate points the community would have less than 66,000 apartments. As household size will decline slightly, fewer people will be housed in the same number of apartments. A reasonable estimate of the total

population at the end of the rebuilding period would be between 175,000 and 180,000 people.

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In the past, ethnic considerations, more than any other, have determined the role of the Lower East Side as a haven for poor and unassimilated people. However, there are signs that ethnic origins will not be as dominant a distinction in the future and will gradually be replaced by economic and related concerns. Since large-scale immigrations of ethnic populations into New York City have essentially halted, the emerging character of the Lower East Side will be a lower-income community composed of long-term residents and new arrivals not so much divided by ethnic and racial cleavages as they are unified by a common lack of participation in the goods and benefits of society.

SOME IMPORTANT SOCIAL ISSUES

The trend of population change will deepen vital social problems that have appeared on the Lower East Side in the last two decades. The age-group distribution in Table 3 indicates two population groups--the elderly and youngsters between 6 and 19--that are growing and whose social and psychological problems may have the most pronounced effect upon the community. Such a polarity also highlights the recent ethnic and racial changes in the Lower East Side: the young represent the problems of many of the Puerto Rican and non-white newcomers, while the aged reflect the condition of the remaining white population accustomed to a different kind of community. Geographically, changes in these two groups are complementary. Newcomers have tended to settle apart from the older people, for example, east of Avenue A, while the aged have remained where the original population is most stable, such as west of Avenue A or below East Broadway.

Understanding and responding to the aspirations and expectations of young people is a paramount challenge for the Lower East Side. Although it is sadly unrecognized now, the necessity for confronting this challenge will be heightened as this group matures. The family and the school, two institutions that should offer recognition, stability, and direction to youngsters, are often unable to respond to these tasks in a poor neighborhood. Conflicts between family and peer environments, the inability of many of the families to foster self-esteem and purposefulness among their children (over one-fifth of the families lack a male head) and neighborhood instability (public schools report an annual student turnover of 30 to 40 percent), can easily alienate young people from society and the very sources that should be supporting them.

In this precarious situation the school usually responds by offering uninspired and irrelevant instruction and illogical discipline, when a sense of purpose and a taste for knowledge need to be communicated. Students who drop out, and even many who finish, have few vocational opportunities or incentives for entering a responsible adult life. Teen-age unemployment has been consistently high and "training" programs or counseling have not made any inroads on it or prevented the youngsters from being disaffected. The result is and will be a growing number of alienated youths seeking self-expression and a share, on their own terms, of the benefits of our society. The impact of these problems on the Lower East Side is manifest in delinquency and more serious and violent crimes, a rising number of teen-age narcotics



EXISTING LAND USE

2

LOWER EAST SIDE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

CITY OF NEW YORK HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CONSULTANTS ABELES, SCHWARTZ AND ASSOCIATES



100 5 200 400
MAY 1970



SOUND
MINOR DEFICIENCIES
MAJOR DEFICIENCIES



BUILDING CONDITIONS

3

LOWER EAST SIDE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

CITY OF NEW YORK HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CONSULTANTS ABEL SCHWARTZ AND ASSOCIATES



100 0 200 300
MAY 1970

3. ASPECTS OF REBUILDING

SUMMARY

The Lower East Side, with its antiquated, wretched street pattern and century-old uninhabitable tenements, is one of New York's neighborhoods most desperately in need of reshaping and rebuilding. At the same time the obstacles to rebuilding are formidable. Aside from questions of cost, vacant land in usable sizes is scarce, the problem of relocation is immense, and administrative and land use stipulations seem designed expressly to deter the kind of gradual, phased rebuilding such an area requires.

Because of the nature of the problems and the community, a staged vest pocket approach has been chosen as most feasible economically as well as in terms of relocation. Under this plan, housing built on smaller usable sites will serve as relocation places for tenants in old-law tenements, which can then be torn down and the land used for new housing with a minimum of relocation. In time this program can progress geometrically and become cumulative. However, to implement a staged approach, not only do the necessary resources have to be allocated, but institutional and administrative performance also has to be made more enlightened and flexible.

For example, minimum acreage requirements for new housing should be changed in view of the scarcity of land; fulfillment of requirements for open space and parking might be postponed until the end of rebuilding so that open land could be used for early relocation; and zoning regulations generally allowing only 135 apartments per acre (R-7) could be altered to allow about 165 per acre or even varied according to the site chosen.

Although the Lower East Side is notoriously short of land, "new land" can be created by judicious use of the following methods: closing unnecessary streets, using neglected park land such as the Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway, and filling in land along the East River shoreline. Together with most of the land now occupied by tenements and urban renewal projects already designated, enough land can be accumulated to supply the necessary 36,000 new apartments. By expanding the usable land supply while reaccommodating almost as many families as now live on the Lower East Side, densities can be reduced from the 240 families per acre now prevailing in the tenement blocks to an average of 165 per acre in the rebuilt community.

The report finds that more than nine-tenths of the old-law tenements are not fit to live in and should be replaced. They are five and six-story walk-ups with most of the rooms having no light or air. They destroy the possibility of decent

living conditions for their inhabitants and the maintenance of a decent neighborhood for all who reside in the area. A good portion of now-law tenements can be rehabilitated. Generally, of the 69,000 apartments presently on the Lower East Side, 18,400 are now up to full standard, another 4,000 or so can be created through rehabilitation, and the remainder must be replaced by new housing. The plan aims to rebuild so that at least 95 percent of the present Lower East Side tenants can remain either in presently adequate, or new housing.

A suggestion for closing Forsyth Street between Canal and Grand Streets and combining it with the land available from the unused Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway demonstrated how a long strip of new housing surrounded by pleasant open space and shopping can become a model for the community. The new street pattern suggested aims not at the superblock of the old-fashioned housing project, but at small modules, with some streets closed to traffic, but with all housing near streets and thus not isolated from the life of the community.

A series of illustrations shows a nine-block prototype area developed for demonstration purposes. The area, typical in its shabbiness and poverty, is bounded by Houston, Delancey, Clinton and Flit Streets. It is proposed to rebuild 1,855 apartments in the form of four-story buildings interspersed with towers, lined along the periphery of the area, enclosing attractive and varied open spaces. The demonstration areas show that rebuilding on the Lower East Side is indeed feasible, provided that it is done in a gradual staged process, and that administrative policy can be reformed to meet the needs of the specific community.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

To a large extent today's Lower East Side preserves almost undisturbed the physical heritage of the past century. Street and residential patterns were poor even when new. As was true one hundred years ago, streets are narrow and dark, antiquated tenement housing endangers human life, and a monotony of filth, despair, and frustration characterize the neighborhood. In contrast to other parts of Manhattan a quietude pervades the atmosphere; the typical din of construction does not often disturb the Lower East Side.

PHYSICAL PROBLEM AND ISSUES

Retaining the Lower East Side as a residential district will entail crucial but gradual changes in physical patterns and their supporting institutional and administrative policies. The bulk of its residential land is densely covered by ancient tenement buildings and reticulated by a redundant street system. Piecemeal rehabilitation and other temporizing measures are inappropriate in a neighborhood that demands a rebuilt and reshaped physical setting. As resources are not available for full and immediate reconstruction, a flexible physical and administrative framework must be established, within which incremental but viable renewal can take place in planned stages.

Land Use and Circulation

The existing land use pattern (see Map 2, Existing Land Use) is a product of the grid street pattern and the geographical location of the neighborhood. Housing and streets account for almost two-thirds of the land area. Three different street grids connect the distended Lower East Side to the surrounding sections of Manhattan and handle traffic within the neighborhood. First, Second and Third Avenue-Bowery and their extensions below Houston Street are the most important north-south routes. Together with cross streets--14th, Houston, Delancey, and Canal--they carry large amounts of through traffic, much of it coming from or going to the three East River bridges and the FDR Drive. The latter avenues and their southerly extensions carry more local traffic, although the frequent intersections and other disruptions inhibit their effective functioning. Grand Street and East Broadway, and several of the numbered cross streets are secondary east-west streets. Most of the numerous remaining streets are local routes used mainly for parking and access to residential blocks. They offer an opportunity to restructure the land development pattern and enhance neighborhood livability by limiting entry of traffic into residential sections.

The Lower East Side contains two types of residential blocks: traditional city blocks of tenements and older commercial buildings, and superblocks of housing projects at much lower densities. Many of the tenement blocks are too small to be economically rebuilt with modern methods and land use practices. On the other hand, many of the superblocks are so large that they are virtually islands of housing, socially and physically isolated from the rest of the

neighborhood. The existing street pattern is a product of the grid street pattern and the geographical location of the neighborhood. Housing and streets account for almost two-thirds of the land area. Three different street grids connect the distended Lower East Side to the surrounding sections of Manhattan and handle traffic within the neighborhood. First, Second and Third Avenue-Bowery and their extensions below Houston Street are the most important north-south routes. Together with cross streets--14th, Houston, Delancey, and Canal--they carry large amounts of through traffic, much of it coming from or going to the three East River bridges and the FDR Drive. The latter avenues and their southerly extensions carry more local traffic, although the frequent intersections and other disruptions inhibit their effective functioning. Grand Street and East Broadway, and several of the numbered cross streets are secondary east-west streets. Most of the numerous remaining streets are local routes used mainly for parking and access to residential blocks. They offer an opportunity to restructure the land development pattern and enhance neighborhood livability by limiting entry of traffic into residential sections.

In view of the current situation, the existing limitations of existing patterns, the existing land use and physical patterns will permit a gradual and orderly, but significant change. Redundant streets will be abolished and blocks and parcels combined to produce a new and more flexible and development format responsive to temporary technology and administrative practices.

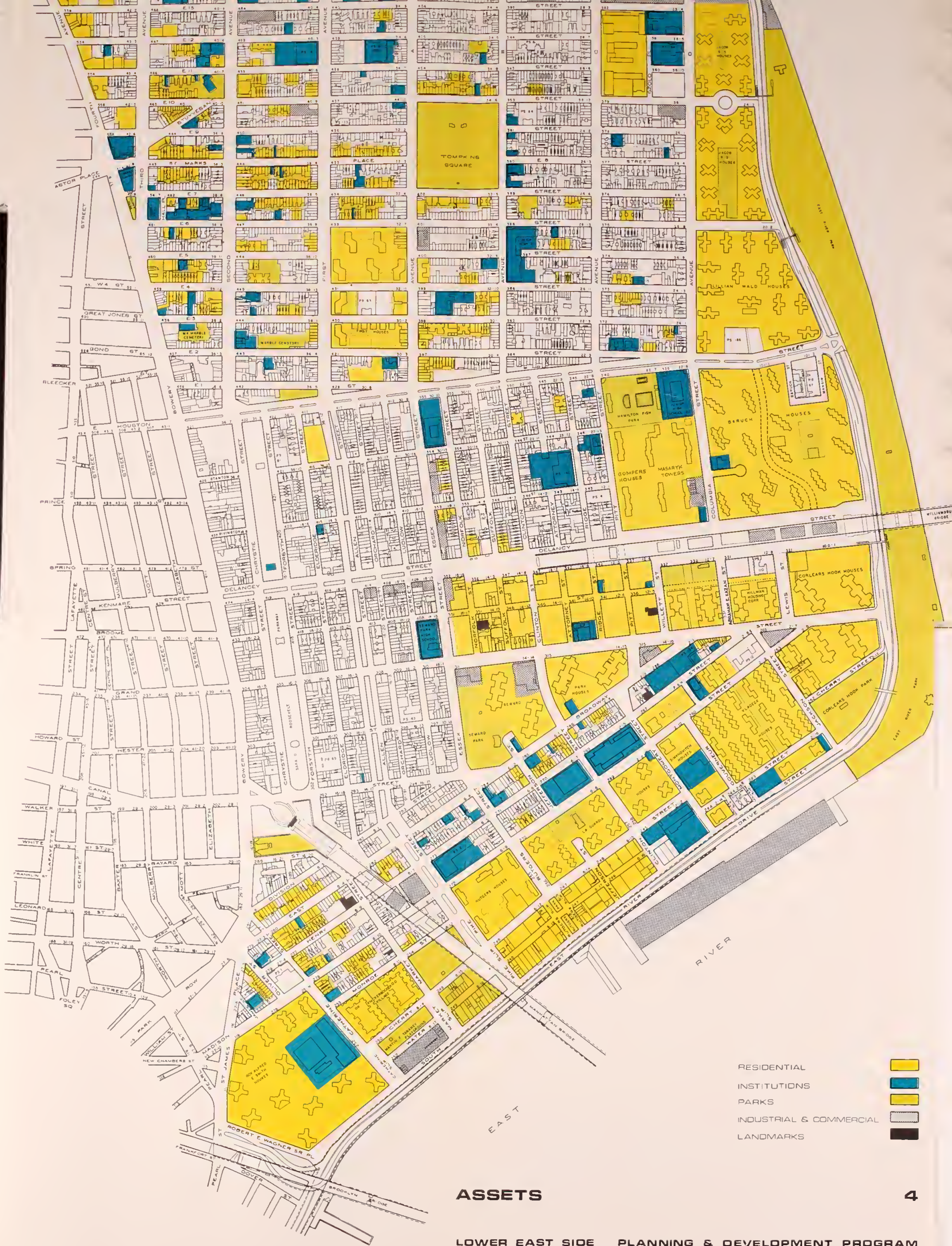
Building Coverage and Usable Land

The intensity with which land is used in the older residential portions of the Lower East Side makes rebuilding, even of the vest-pocket variety, without disruption, exceptionally difficult. As Map 3 (Building Conditions) shows, the tenement districts have very little open space; these buildings typically cover about ninety per cent of a plot 25 feet wide and 100 feet deep. Except for a handful of locations, most of which will be used in the first stage of rebuilding, there are few opportunities to insert new buildings into the existing fabric. Although building coverage in public housing rarely exceeds thirty percent, the buildings are so arranged on the land that in most cases it is impossible to introduce new structures on the sites. If the community is to be changed at all, new physical and management strategies that permit rebuilding in the situations that offer themselves on the Lower East Side will have to be formulated.

Map 5, Development Opportunities, shows on a composite basis all land that could be immediately considered available for development on the Lower East Side. It includes vacant parcels, parking lots, buildings that are empty or almost empty, one-storey structures and buildings in poor condition. If the criteria for selecting sites for new housing (see Chapter 5) are applied to these sites, there are few locations where it is feasible to begin immediate rebuilding. As most of the usable sites are consumed in Stage I of the vest-pocket housing program, the creation of subsequent sites is dependent on clearing buildings that are now occupied. However, as will be detailed later, the Lower East Side does have unused reserves that can be transformed into "new land" for rebuilding. For example, almost eighty acres, about half of which will be used for housing, can be recaptured by closing redundant streets. Most of Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway, a sadly neglected and unpatronized park, can be used for building and the park land regained later. About twenty additional acres can be created by filling in part of the East River shoreline above the Brooklyn Bridge.

Building Density

Just about half of the 70,000 occupied housing units are in uninhabitable old-law tenements which occupy 145 acres at an average density of 240 units to the acre. If these 145 acres were rebuilt at the prevailing zoning, which is almost totally R-7 or its commercial equivalent (a maximum of 135 two-bedroom apartments to the acre), with a small amount of R-8 (a maximum of 220 two-bedroom apartments), about 21,000 new units could be built. The result would be a net loss of 14,000 apartments from the number now on the land. An important target of the rebuilding program should be to replace as many



- RESIDENTIAL
- INSTITUTIONS
- PARKS
- INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL
- LANDMARKS

ASSETS

4

LOWER EAST SIDE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

CITY OF NEW YORK HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CONSULTANTS ABELSON, SCHWARTZ AND ASSOCIATES



MAY 1970



OPPORTUNITIES
 URBAN RENEWAL AREAS
 MAJOR ACTION AREAS

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

5

LOWER EAST SIDE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
 PLANNING COMMISSION
 CONSULTANTS
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APR 1971

of these 14,000 apartments as possible within the Lower East Side, by using the "new land" resources, employing new administrative and land development concepts, and rebuilding at higher densities and land coverage than are now permitted.

Building Conditions

Map 3, Building Conditions, clearly shows the bifurcation of housing conditions on the Lower East Side: the project housing, both low and moderate income, is in good condition, while the tenement districts, except where rehabilitation has occurred, are uniformly in fair or poor condition. Map 4, Assets, implies the long-term projection of the Building Conditions map. The dominant housing assets with thirty or forty more years of useful life ahead, are the projects. The only other residential buildings that should be kept are renovated tenements, most new-laws (if renovated), the few multiple-dwellings (post 1929), and a few rows of small dwellings left from the Lower East Side's era as an upper-class neighborhood. Except for the projects, the bulk of residential assets are above Houston Street and west of Avenue A, although small clusters occur east of Avenue A and below East Broadway. Between Delancey Street and East Broadway there are few residential buildings that can be salvaged. This assessment parallels the Implications of Map 5, Development Opportunities. Where development opportunities are most plentiful (bordered by a heavy dotted line) there are few durable assets.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

Formidable as the problems of assembling land and securing funds are, they are matched by institutional and administrative constraints that can exert a considerable, if not decisive, influence over the location, pace, and scale of rebuilding. These administrative problems are of two kinds: those relating to the staging of rebuilding and the synchronization of site acquisition, relocation, and construction, and those concerned with land-use controls.

The former are largely due to the divergence between urban renewal, the main administrative device for acquiring land for rebuilding, and the apparent goals of a staged vest-pocket program. Urban renewal as it has been traditionally practiced is essentially a procedure for making available building sites at suitable prices. It has had little to do with the sensitive issue of relocating people from these sites or helping them to remain in the neighborhood. On the other hand, the vest-pocket format was designed as a humane antidote to the problems of relocation and rehousing. By exploiting available land opportunities and consciously shaping actions to the demands of relocation and rehousing, the vest-pocket approach offers a much more acceptable way of rebuilding than the land acquisition and marketability standards of urban renewal. Lately the vest-pocket concept has been expressed through the Federal Neighborhood Development Program, in which projects are planned and undertaken annually in accordance with the availability of funds and sites. Instead of basing decisions on a fixed urban renewal plan, yearly commitments can be made in response to emerging needs and opportunities.

Staging, Relocation, and Rehousing

As discussed in the beginning of this chapter, tenement districts, such as the Lower East Side, are so compactly settled and have so little

slant land that even to redevelop them can only proceed at a gradual and carefully controlled pace. For example, the Housing Authority needs sites of at least one and one-half acres for a public housing project. In the future tenement block of the Lower East Side such a site would place over 250 families, while only about 100 families could be rehoused under the current zoning. However, the Authority's stipulation is more a product of administrative practice and zoning regulations than a rule dictated by any immutable situation. If regulations were made more flexible, smaller sites could be used for rebuilding in a vest-pocket format.

A recent City Planning Department staff report on aspects of rebuilding and zoning in areas like the Lower East Side stated that, "the administrative problems of the staging process (are) the major obstacle to a rehousing renewal policy. It requires close coordination between the relocation, demolition and construction processes."

Another example of the institutional inhibition of rebuilding is the rule that the full open space requirements for a new building be satisfied on the site before occupancy. This makes sensible rebuilding on the Lower East Side costly, protracted and disruptive. For if open space requirements are to be fulfilled by using the land occupied by tenements--whose residents are destined to become tenants of the new building--the tenements must be cleared and their residents displaced before the new building is ready to receive them.

If renewal is to be accelerated and rehousing needs satisfied, then physical and administrative means must be devised that will permit sites with a combination of vacant land and buildings and occupied buildings to be progressively used for staged rebuilding. While the rebuilding of a larger site, if perhaps a block, may extend over two or more stages, there must be a firm commitment to acquire the entire site to ensure that the open space and parking requirements will eventually be satisfied.

In addition, other measures, as listed in the Planning Department study, should be taken to ensure the integrity of the projects. These measures include: retention of the occupied buildings long enough to move tenants into the new buildings; waivers of bulk and setback requirements to permit construction of the new building; commitments to tenants regarding relocation priorities; and schedules for the stages and agreements on the synchronization of clearance and new construction. Provision could also be made for satisfying parking and open space requirements at sites not contiguous to the principal site.

By progressively using all or part of the open space allotment of a first stage as the building site for a second stage, a series of staged redevelopment projects could be implemented at several locations in the community. As redevelopment proceeds and becomes more inclusive, appropriate open space and parking requirements would be met, and increases in density and variations in building type could be introduced to permit a mixture in income, class, and family types. Thus the benefits of rebuilding and relocation would be cumulative. The justification for encouraging partial satisfaction of

Summary of Specific Staging and Renewal Concepts for R-7 Districts, Department of City Planning, Urban Design Group.

parking, open space, and community service requirements is that these services and facilities are not available under existing conditions and would not be available under traditional urban renewal any sooner than under a staged approach.

Under this type of program close coordination between new construction, acquisition, and relocation is extraordinarily important. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that if this coordination is not forthcoming, especially in the early years of rebuilding, vest-pocket renewal of the neighborhood will be faced with almost insuperable obstacles.

Stage I of the vest-pocket program, as described in Chapter 5, provides 1,805 new apartments on eight sites. After Stage I few vacant sites will remain that do not entail substantial relocation. If relocation is to be avoided and rebuilding advanced, optimal use must be made of the 1,805 Stage I apartments as relocation resources for Stage II. In order to "capture" as many of these apartments as possible for Stage II relocation, Stage II sites must be designated and acquired before the Stage I housing is completed. Thus relocations will have priority for the new housing and will be able to move in directly. Also, occupancy of Stage I and subsequent housing must be reserved for the affected relocations; if it is not, sites for additional stages will not be liberated.

The principal purpose of Stage I is to provide the "surplus" of apartments necessary to initiate rebuilding at an effective scale, to start a chain reaction, as it were. While Stage I sites are widely dispersed because of the availability of land and the expatriations of neighborhood groups, Stage II sites should be concentrated on blocks with site opportunities and local resources in terms of where inroads can be made into sections of especially poor housing. Vest-pocket site designations for Stage II can be relatively large, encompassing one or more blocks, with staging designed to minimize displacement and maximize rehusing possibilities.

It is not uncommon for the conventional urban renewal cycle to take eight to ten years from the time selection of a site commences until the building is finally occupied. By combining the accelerated site selection and acquisition procedures of the vest-pocket approach with the advantages of coordinated staging, this time can be halved. Once the overlapping steps of vest-pocket development are under way, the year and a half to two years normally used for off-site relocation could be saved by having on-site relocation already available. Up to two more years can be saved in the pre-relocation steps by having the site in the designation and acquisition procedures before relocation begins. In an era of rapidly increasing costs, the accelerated staged process is also more sound economically than conventional urban renewal.

Land Use Controls: Zoning and Density

As noted above, if the townments with 240 apartments per acre are rebuilt at current zoning provisions, a substantial loss of apartments--over 13,000--will occur. Even rebuilding and new modes of land use will not sufficiently compensate for this loss. The two approaches open are: to increase the zoning density from the predominant R-7 category for each vest-pocket site, or recognize the ubiquity of the problem and devise a comprehensive alternative, applicable to similar neighborhoods. The first approach, which is essentially "spot-zoning" on a large scale without reference to a comprehensive

plan, will reduce the time but not assure an improved resident environment. Under the second approach, regulations could be made responsive to general conditions in the city and aimed at higher densities and improved livability. Even within a community, different sections and streets may adapt best to different zoning requirements. For example, such wide streets as Delaney, First, Second and Third Avenue-Bowery, could easily support a density of 100 apartments per acre, while small interior streets should be limited to perhaps 150

A basic framework within which such regulations could be instituted already exists in the city's land use controls, namely the large-scale residential development provisions of the New York City Zoning Resolution. The Resolution recognizes that the "district regulations (that is, the present R-7 zoning) may impose necessary rigidities and thereby prevent achievement of the best possible site plan within the overall density and bulk controls." It therefore provides new regulations (the large-scale residential development provisions),

"designed to allow greater flexibility for the purposes of securing better site planning for development of vacant land to achieve more efficient use of increasingly scarce land within the framework of overall bulk controls, to enable open space in large scale residential developments to be arranged in such a way as best to serve active and passive recreation needs of the residents...."

As suggested by the Department of City Planning, large-scale development provisions in the form of a Planned Unit Development would be applied to districts now zoned R-7. Rather than attaining higher densities by simply changing the zoning category from R-7 to R-8, under the large-scale provisions a series of incentives would link increased density to specified improvements. Thus the developer, for example, a community sponsor or the Housing Authority, would be permitted to use a smaller site than specified if he provided covered parking instead of surface parking and well-designed open space instead of simply leaving the spaces between the buildings. Such "credits" according to the City Planning Department would permit "proportional increases in zoning rooms (density), greater coverage (lower buildings), and greater bulk."

Studies indicate that a density of around 165 apartments (two-bedroom average) per acre is about the optimum at which development costs are acceptable, a reasonable choice in living arrangements and building types can be attained, as well as a variety of open spaces and tolerable harmony with surrounding buildings and streets. If a greater density is allowed, high towers will predominate, the choice of building types will be severely circumscribed, and consistency with the present scale of the neighborhood will be ignored. Moreover, high densities and the architectural solutions associated with them may prove to be too inflexible and monolithic for the closely-knit staging sequence described above.

In terms of building types, a density of about 165 apartments per acre would permit a mixture of walk-ups, lower apartment buildings, and towers. (Such a mixture of types within a planned development is described below.) According to the city's studies, a site of at least 80,000 square feet (almost two acres) is needed for the environmental benefits and den-

sity gains that should company for ale redevelopment in an R-7 zone. Ideally, the site should be larger, perhaps the equivalent of two or more blocks, permitting the additional benefits of a more flexible deployment of open space, parking and supporting facilities than would be possible if each building were constructed independently.

In sum, the optimal situation for a rebuilding and rehousing policy for the Lower East Side is as follows: vacant and/or uninhabited sites of at least 80,000 square feet offering an immediate opportunity to start rebuilding would be designated for vest-pocket renewal. Large-scale development provisions would permit renewal at an average of 165 apartments per acre and introduce desirable environmental qualities. Sites would be progressively redeveloped through a series of vest-pocket stages in which the housing of one stage becomes the relocation resource of the next stage, and the open space of the one becomes the construction site of the second. As the process continues, the renewal and rehousing cycle can be accelerated and overlapped, and a continuous program of neighborhood redevelopment set in motion.

TABLE 2

Estimated Housing Inventory
by Building Type, 1970

<u>Type of Building</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
Old-Low - Unrenovated	37,000	58.1
Old Low - Renovated	1,500	2.2
New Low (a)	4,200	6.0
Low-Rent Projects	12,100	17.4
Moderate-Rent Projects		
Cooperatives	7,700	11.1
Rental	3,800	5.5
High-Rent	800	1.2
Other Multiple Dwellings and Miscellaneous Residences (b)	2,500	3.5
<u>Total</u>	69,600	100.0

(a) Built between 1901 and 1929

(b) Multiple dwellings built after 1929, renovated small buildings, etc.

Source: U.S. Census of Housing, 1950 and 1960, N.Y.C. Housing Authority, N.Y.C. Housing and Development Administration, and consultant's estimates.

GOALS FOR REBUILDING

The "raw material" for rebuilding the Lower East Side will consist of about 350 of the thousand acres that the community now occupies. The largest share of this land that can be rebuilt over the next three to four decades, about 145 acres, is now devoted to old-law tenements that cannot and should not be retained. Most of this land should be reallocated for housing. The next largest share, almost 80 acres, is now used for streets that will not be necessary in a restructured circulation and land development system. About half of it will be redeployed for housing, with other portions going to open space, parking and street improvements. Much of the 90 acres now devoted to commerce and industry--often not compatible with a residential environment--will be released for other uses as the demand for such acreage declines over the next few decades. About 50 acres of land, most of it in two approved urban renewal projects, and Stage I of the vest-pocket housing program, are already scheduled for redevelopment over the next decade. About 5,600 new apartments plus some community services and other uses will be built on this land while almost 1,000 existing apartments will be lost.

Only about 3,000 of the 37,000 apartments in unrenovated old law tenement buildings lend themselves to long-term rehabilitation. They are, for the most part, found in tenement near renovated buildings or near more durable buildings such as multiple dwellings or schools. About two-thirds of the new law tenements, judging by their location and present condition, can be rehabilitated for extended use. This involves a total of about 35,000 apartments that are unsuitable for long-term rehabilitation (more than twenty years) and should be replaced as the Lower East Side is rebuilt.

The conclusion that an extensive old law rehabilitation program is not the answer to the Lower East Side's housing problems stems from their basic design and structural qualities and past experience with tenement rehabilitation. Old law tenements in this neighborhood are typically six-storey walkups covering about ninety percent of a plot 25 feet wide and 100 feet deep. The rooms are in tandem. In the oldest, built between 1850 and 1879, only the end rooms have direct light and air. Tenements built after 1879 follow the "dumbbell plan" and have a narrow light well between buildings which permits some light and air, albeit stagnant and dim, into the interior rooms. Writing in the Tenement Problem in 1903, Osoferest and Vailter, two early housing reformers, describe the setting that is still frighteningly real for over half the residents of the Lower East Side:

"Of the fourteen rooms on each floor, only four receive direct light and air from the street or from the small yard at the back of the building.... of the four rooms in the front apartments, only two are large enough to be deserving of the name of rooms. The front one is generally about 10 feet 6 inches wide by 11 feet 3 inches long, the other room, the kitchen, is generally the same size.... Behind these

Table 12, below, shows, as of 1970, the estimated distribution of housing in occupied buildings by basic type.

4
The rooms are the best. The walls are hardly more than 1/2 inch thick, being only about 2 feet wide and 8 feet 6 inches long (60 square feet each), enough to contain a bed. These rooms get no light and air whatsoever, except that which comes from the air shafts and except on the highest floors are generally almost totally dark."

Starting with First Houses in 1936 (the nation's first public housing), there have been numerous attempts to rehabilitate old low tenements. Despite limited success in minimizing relocation and preserving the "scale of neighborhood," tenement rehabilitation does not offer any permanent solution to the community's housing problem. Although First Houses, by reducing tenement land coverage from 90 to 45 percent, succeeded in creating a pleasant and livable environment, the net result was a drastic reduction in the number of people who could be accommodated on the land. First Houses yielded densities of 183 persons per acre as against between 340 and 400 in newer public housing, such as La Guardia Houses, and over 600 persons in the tenement tenements. If tenement rehabilitation involves such a population attrition, it cannot be considered as a reasonable rebuilding alternative for the Lower East Side.

Thirty years later the "instant rehabilitation" demonstration proved that tenements could be rapidly rehabilitated at a cost per usable square foot only slightly higher than for new, large scale housing on open land. Between these two notable experiments in tenement rehabilitation there were and continue to be numerous ventures involving individual buildings or small groups of buildings. Since they are based on the availability of vacant buildings, these experiments are scattered throughout the Lower East Side without much regard for the appropriateness of rehabilitation in particular locations.

Even if tenements can be rehabilitated at costs close to that of new housing, the rehabilitated buildings retain many of their objectionable features. Land coverage is still very high, leaving little open space; the building is still a five or six-story walk-up, the "air shafts" remain, casting the interior rooms in shadow and foul air. The conclusion of this report is that rehabilitation will have very limited utility on the Lower East Side and should be reserved for the more ample and habitable new low (post 1901) tenements and places where clusters of old-flows can be renovated and incorporated into an encompassing rebuilding plan.

THE LIMITATIONS OF REBUILDING

The physical limitations and opportunities for rebuilding the Lower East Side are apparent in the pettish street system and an obsolete and development pattern that in turn supports antiquated buildings until for continued habitation or durable renovation. In the best of worlds, the most appropriate remedy would be to clear and reconstruct large segments, say four or six blocks, at a time. But an approach at this scale is presently precluded by the factors of relocation and cost.

The staged vest-pocket approach, described above, was adopted as a modest and non-disruptive method in view of the limitations. As detailed in Chapter 2, on the vest-pocket program, stage I displaces 720 households but yields 1,800 new

apartments for future rehousing. The stage Ies the surplus of apartments from the first stage for relocation and itself offers a rehousing supply for a third stage. Pursuing a coordinated and judicious program of new construction and controlled rehousing, large sections of the Lower East Side could be renewed gradually within a tolerable level of disruption.

Of the estimated 69,600 apartments in the Lower East Side, 28,400 are in sound modern or fully rehabilitated buildings that are not expected to need anything more than good maintenance and a modest level of repairs over the next few decades. Of the remaining 41,200 apartments, about 35,200 are in old law (and some new law) tenement buildings that should be replaced. The remaining 5,000 can be retained if they are rehabilitated to varying degrees. If they are rehabilitated at modern standards, these 5,000 apartments will yield about 4,000 renovated units. Thus, existing buildings can provide a total of 32,400 apartments, 28,400 presently sound apartments and 4,000 in renovated tenements.

As noted in Chapter 2, a basic goal of this statement is to rebuild the Lower East Side for as close as possible to the number of households that now live there. Numerically, this would be satisfied if 66,000 or about 95 percent of the families now in the area could be rehoused. Rebuilding for a smaller population would entail extensive dislocation and community disruption. The housing that would be required elsewhere to shelter the displaced families does not exist, nor has the city government taken any steps yet that would permit an extensive, orderly relocation policy to be established in slum communities. Equally important, the Lower East Side has a mature infrastructure and locational attributes capable of supporting a reasonably large and compact population.

Although the aim is to keep the population at about 66,000 families (total population will decline because of gradual reductions in household size), substantial density reductions in the tenement districts should also be sought. Duplication of present densities, averaging 240 apartments to the net residential acre, will not permit enough open space and community services, or allow for choice in living arrangements for various types of families. Studies undertaken for this report indicate that 165 (two-bedroom) apartments to the acre is the optimal density at which ground level space needs, choices in livability, significant variations in design and the administrative imperatives of rebuilding can be reasonably balanced and a satisfactory ambience produced.

If 66,000 households are to be rehoused, allowing for a three percent vacancy rate, about 68,000 apartments will be needed. A total of 32,400 apartments will be available in existing sound buildings or through rehabilitation, and 5,600 apartments will be provided in projects that are already under construction or in development, leaving 30,000 apartments to be scheduled. At the desirable average rebuilding density of 165 units per acre, between 180 and 185 acres will be needed to accommodate 30,000 apartments. The 35,000 tenement apartments that are to be replaced occupy about 145 acres, of which 130 can be re-used for housing, the remainder going to other uses, such as parks and new schools. An additional 50 to 55 acres can be gained over the next several decades by absorbing land now devoted to obsolete schools and neglected parks, closing streets, and filling in land along the East River. If land from these sources is added

[illegible]

About 9 a.m. from the fog street cars will have to be rerouted to take certain improvements in the new layout. The fog from the street widening and improved connections. Resubscription of the fog changes in the street network will make the entire circulation system work more efficiently.

filling in shoreline areas has been one of the traditional ways for New York and many other waterfront cities to create "new land" for growth. Fortunately there are still some sections along the East River where land can be created as part of the rational reconstruction of the Lower East Side. Each acre that can be gained from floods or water will permit more apartments to be built while keeping the density of the community at a moderate level. Most of the shoreline is devoted to the East River Park, which itself needs to be redesigned and rehabilitated, and several new piers. However, the area between the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges has been mainly cleared of obsolete piers and is available for re-use (Item W) as is the similar space under the FDR Drive, which is now used for parking. The proximity of the shoreline to the financial and civic centers and to other large housing enterprises, such as the Two Bridges and Brooklyn Bridge Southeast renewal areas, as well as the availability of transportation and public services, make it a desirable location for housing. Certainly the prospect of the downtown skyline and the Brooklyn shoreline is one of the most striking in the city. Almost 20 acres can be gained from landfill along this part of the river. Between 10 and 15 a row should be used for housing, with the rest devoted to open space and park land.

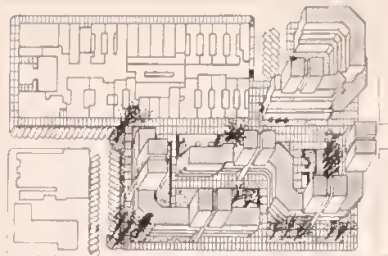


ILLUSTRATION 1 C NC EIGHTH

Although New York's park land is plentiful, it should be considered inviolate, if must be admitted that some parks are poorly located and designed and would be more useful elsewhere. Such a park is Sara Roosevelt Parkway, which stretches the narrow block wide and 100 blocks long from Canal and Houston Streets between Chrystie and Forsyth Streets. Interrupted by through streets, marginally located in regard to the neighborhood centers of population, bereft of activities or indeed of any *raison d'être*, the park is sparsely used and sadly neglected by city agencies. As proposals in this report call for rebuilding the southerly blocks of the Bowery for industry (Item 4), the park will become even less useful.

In contrast, the blocks stretch from 13th to the Parkway to Pitt Street, containing more than fifteen thousand families, are unrelieved by any open space except for Seward Park and an asphalt school playground. These blocks, with the oldest and most run-down housing on the Lower East Side, offer the best opportunities to assemble land for rebuilding. The city is demolishing 1,700 homes in this congested district, and if the city's plans are carried out, the city will have a large area of land to start the process.

On many aspects the most opportune land for the J. Edgar L. Roosevelt Parkway. Together with the street, which can be eliminated with new traffic routings, a total of 14.5 acres can be made available for rebuilding purposes. The entire park would be taken, except for the Senior Citizens Center at Alway Street. This cross-street, of Delancey and Chrystie streets would become a place of congregation at the end of Alway Street, the Lower East Side's "Main Street."

Exploring the Parkway': Long narrow shape and flexibility, it can be developed as a "spine" of new housing, schools and community service for the nearby blocks. Designed as a unit, it could accommodate new cars, underground parking, a variety of public services, and over one thousand new apartments. In a sense it would be a miniature "new town" introduced into the fabric of the Lower East Side. As shown on Map 1, Proposals for use of the Park and Forsyth Street should begin between Grand and Canal Streets, where the need for new housing is most acute and where a new school, as a replacement for the antiquated Lincoln School, is an immediate concern. All of the

lost park land will be replaced in more usable and accessible forms, such as by absorbing unneeded streets, when the residential blocks east of Forsyth Street are rebuilt.

Obviously, legislative action and protracted administrative negotiations will be required if the park land is to be available for rebuilding and assurances given as to its later replacement. As these arrangements may take years and the needs are pressing, planning and implementation should be started immediately.

Other proposals for the use of park land involve placing a new public school and some parking (for users of the park) in the East River Park. These are described in detail in the chapter on Special Planning Studies.

OTHER SURRENDERED LAND

Over the next few decades some other public land, now mainly used for schools and playgrounds, will become available for use in rebuilding. Additional public or semi-public buildings, such as the Court House on Second Avenue and several synagogues will also give up their present uses and be renovated and retained because of historical or esthetic interest. Although the released sites and buildings will not yield large acreage, several of them are strategically located and many are already in public ownership. Illustrations 4 and 5 show how an obsolete school, P.S. 4, after it is replaced by the new P.S. 142 nearby, will be used as a park within a redeveloped area.

A FORMAT FOR REBUILDING

Within the next few decades the Lower East Side will change in unpredictable ways. Problems will intrude, opportunities will arise, and resources will materialize that are not now apparent but will warrant attention. Charting a detailed plan for physical change and rebuilding for a future twenty or thirty years away is futile and unrealistic. Rather than setting specific land use assignments, this plan statement sets down a general physical framework within which a variety of land use decisions and architectural forms can be realized. Specific land use recommendations are only made for the immediate future of five or six years, for which needs and resources can be clearly identified. In areas such as health services or livelihood where land use implications are less important than, say, housing or transportation, recommendations concentrate on the levels of service and organization of programs.

Within the commitment to gradual reconstruction of the area, a basic physical framework is proposed that is flexible enough to permit redevelopment opportunities to be exploited as they ap-

pear, but firm enough to offer a coherent environment at various levels of fulfillment. Previous parts of this chapter discussed the more important physical and administrative issues that a serious rebuilding effort must confront. Rebuilding the Lower East Side will take the form of redeveloping discrete units of land totaling several hundred acres. These land units are defined by and linked to each other and to the surrounding territory by a street system. Therefore, a paramount purpose of the rebuilding format is to implant a fundamental system of streets that will set the physical framework and dimensions for redevelopment, and to suggest a land unit or planning module within which planned change can occur.

A STREET SYSTEM

Considering the necessity for gradual change and the strong imprint of existing conditions, a new street system, at least in its principal features, will be closely related to the existing one. Evaluation of future traffic requirements and likely development patterns, as detailed in the chapter on Transportation and Streets, led to proposals for a hierarchical street system that emphasizes certain major arteries. The north-south number avenues and 14th, Houston, Canal, and Delancey Streets remain the main routes through the Lower East Side. The latter avenues and their continuations below Houston Street, and some of the east-west number streets will serve lesser volumes of traffic moving mainly within the community. Other streets, primarily east-west, will carry local traffic destined for residential blocks. Streets that prolong an outmoded land development pattern are closed as traffic-ways and re-used as building sites or open space. The effect of these actions is to hasten the flow of necessary traffic, deter all but locally-destined vehicles from entering residential districts, and create a defined framework that will support rebuilding.

A series of traffic-free residential blocks, small super-blocks in effect, is formed in which planned rebuilding of the tenements and other obsolete buildings can take place. As Map 7, Circulation, shows, arterial and collector streets define new land units made up of existing blocks. However, within these sections, streets are left open for local traffic so that the new residential blocks are relatively small compared with the massive superblocks of earlier projects. The prototype rebuilding scheme shown in Illustrations 2 to 6 shows typical block divisions: nine existing blocks are reduced to three three-block land units separated by two local streets.

The intention is not to create large superblocks, as in the old public housing projects (See Maps 2, 3, or 4), where the inhabitants are physically and socially isolated from the rest of the community. Smaller blocks are sought, where the new housing can both be a part of and reshape the community's fabric of streets and spaces.

Two disparate attitudes towards the role of the street in shaping and giving continuity to community life are revealed in the comparison between a rebuilt segment of the Lower East Side (Illustrations 2 to 6), and older public housing projects. The form of public housing on the Lower East Side destroys the continuity and pressures of the street in favor of a regimented physical and social setting. Buildings are deposited on the landscape in response to an abstract pattern of building placement and space standards rather than an understanding of how living arrangements can be varied and how people use neighborhood

spaces. The new design respects the street and recognizes how it can link new buildings with customary ways of life by giving cohesion to the way individuals move about, shop, and meet one another. It provides a reasonable choice in living arrangements and access to open space, and encourages the chance encounters that make city life exciting.

The new design does not rigidly separate auto traffic from life along the streets. The value of the street as traffic-carrier and focus for community life can be seen from the fact that a favorite weekend pastime on the Lower East Side, as in many poor neighborhoods, is repairing and washing cars. Cars are used as an extension of the house and the street for drinking beer and conversation. Even abandoned cars serve a purpose as places where youthful imaginations and destructive urges can find expression. Street vendors, in which the Lower East Side abounds, set their stands up at interseptions where they can capture pedestrian and vehicular traffic. None of these things can occur where residential blocks are very large and cars are rigidly excluded. Thus, designs for rebuilding create reasonably sized precincts where street life and cars can meet frequently and a variety of activities--strolling, play, shopping--can happen.

A LAND MODULE

As shown on Map 7, circulation, the new street system shapes a basic land module suitable for progressive rebuilding. This module should be large enough to accommodate large-scale redevelopment, and of such dimensions and configuration to satisfy the physical and administrative requirements of staged rebuilding. As will be detailed shortly, the form and development sequence of these land units will depend on the initial set of development opportunities, the existing street grid, and the degree to which renewal can be used to reinforce other types of community reconstruction. Depending on the availability of relocation housing and resources for rebuilding, individual land units could be rebuilt all at once as a single project, or work could progress simultaneously on several stages within a larger module.

PROTOTYPE REBUILDING PLAN

The prototype rebuilding plan, shown in the appendix, is a basic plan of the physical and administrative concept of the reconstruction of the Lower East Side as a prototype renewal area.

The prototype rebuilding plan, shown in the appendix, is a basic plan of the physical and administrative concept of the reconstruction of the Lower East Side as a prototype renewal area.

percent of the apartments were dilapidated and 29 percent deteriorated; only half were considered sound. Mixed in with the old tenements, and mostly on their ground floors, are over two hundred businesses and institutions, ranging from small one-man shops to a few larger shops along Clinton Street, to active wholesale outlets that attract streams of large trucks into residential blocks. Synagogues, either abandoned or with shrinking congregations, share frontages with Pentecostal churches. Like any other group of blocks in the large middle belt of the Lower East Side, this section is representative of older residential sections ripe for renewal.

On the north and south the nine blocks are bordered by two major streets--Houston and Delancey--while on the east and west Pitt and Clinton Streets, two of the collector streets that thread through the Lower East Side, set clear boundaries. Within this street network the nine blocks emerge as a defined and workable unit. Only four residential buildings with 115 apartments merit long-term retention. A public school, a boys club, and a cluster of church buildings are the only other structures warranting retention.

The area betrays the physical conditions typically associated with such districts: old, densely occupied tenements cut off from light and air and crowded on small lots; small, inefficient blocks; an excess of land devoted to streets, and many vacant lots and empty, dilapidated one-story buildings. In fact, as illustration 2 shows, the



ILLUSTRATION 2

NINE BLOCK REBUILDING
EXISTING CONDITIONS AND
STAGE 1

most notable asset of the nine blocks is an ample inventory of opportunities that can become the kernel for rebuilding. The one hopeful sign of public concern, although it will displace over two hundred families and twenty businesses, is a new school, P.S. 142, soon to be built on the block bounded by Rivington, Delancey, Attorney, and Ridge Streets.

Illustrations 2 through 7 depict the progression of the vest-pocket renewal cycle from present conditions to complete reconstruction. Table 13 summarizes the program by stages in terms of gains and losses.

TABLE 13
Summary of Proposals
for Nine-Block Prototype Area
Existing Conditions

Stage	Apartments		Businesses & Institutions	New Apts.
	Removed	Retained		
I	612	80	61	500
II	390	35	53	655
III	443	--	46	300
IV	480	--	44	400
Totals	1,925	115	204	1,855

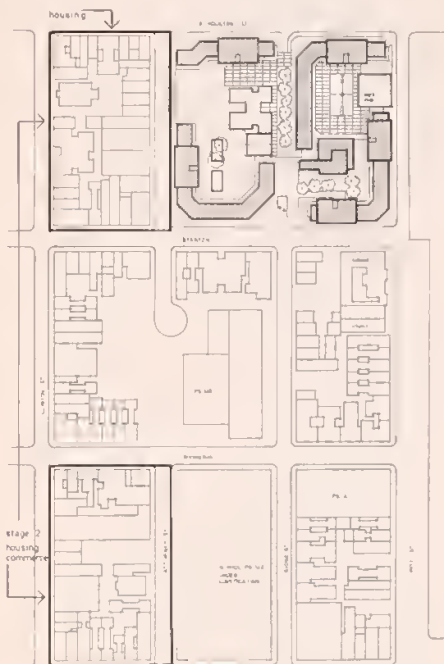


ILLUSTRATION 3

NINE BLOCK REBUILDING:
STAGE 2

NATURE OF REBUILDING

29

There are now 2,040 apartments in the nine blocks. An estimated 1,970 apartments, 1,855 new ones and 115 in retained buildings will compose the rebuilt area, satisfying the goal of rehousing 95 percent of the households in the Lower East Side in a rebuilding program. At a density of 160 apartments (two bedroom average) to the acre, the new apartments will occupy about 11.5 acres.

Both interior north-south streets--Attorney and Ridge Streets--which already terminate at Houston Street, will be closed and incorporated within the rebuilt blocks. Because of the gradual nature of rebuilding, several of these closed streets will not be used as actual building sites, but will be kept as play and open spaces. It is estimated that 80,000 square feet of usable land can be gained by street closings.

Consistent with the principles for redesigning the basic land units, the nine existing blocks, each measuring about 200 feet by 400 feet (excluding streets) are amalgamated into three blocks, each 700 feet by 400 feet. These blocks are large enough to offer the benefits of a redesigned street and block pattern--internal open space and a variety of building types--without being so large that they isolate their inhabitants from the life of the surrounding street and community.

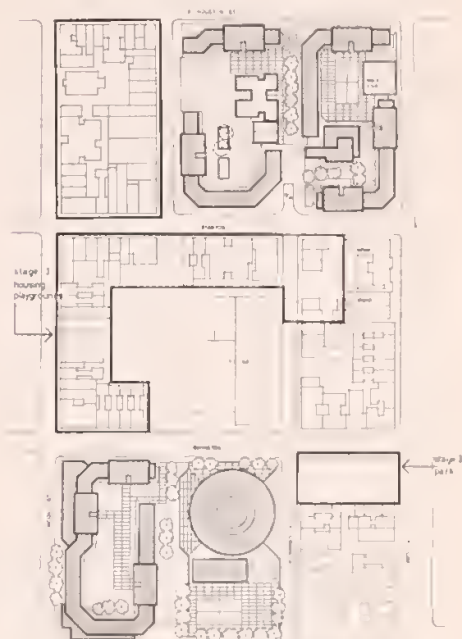
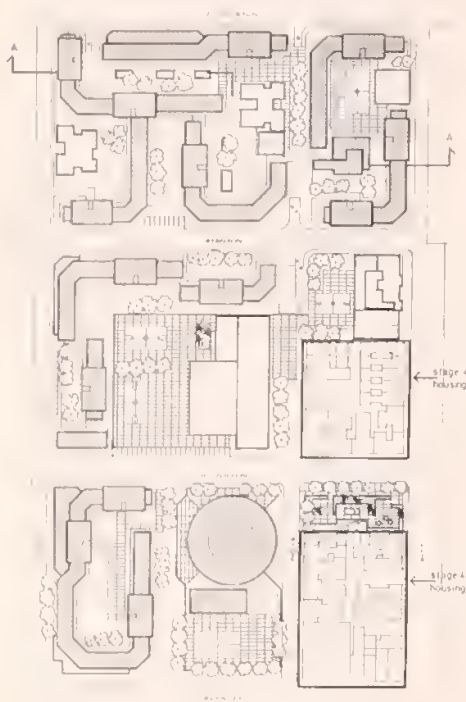


ILLUSTRATION 4

NINE BLOCK REBUILDING:
STAGE 3

Many of the storefronts along the interior streets are empty or used for storage or some community use, e.g., a church or social hall. In the future, if a wide street commerce will be encouraged to avoid service traffic, and to concentrate commercial frontage at the most accessible points. However, new space will be provided along the cross-streets for those among the churches, club, and neighborhood organization, which wish to remain. Even such local attractions as game-rooms and laundromats will be able to find space along these streets.



STAGING

Acquisition and re-use of land has been divided into four stages. Stage 1 (see Illustration 2) involves three full blocks, one for the new school and two for new housing, with relocation of 210 families for the school and 402 for the housing. The two housing blocks present a combination of opportunities--vacant land and buildings, parking lots and one-story commercial structures, and some of the worst housing in the nine blocks--that enable assembly of a total site of over four acres, including the school site, Stage 1 street. On this site 500 new apartments can be built and 80 retained in existing buildings. Since reconstruction of the nine blocks will be coordinated with other aspects of the vest-pocket program, apartments produced in Stage 1 of the vest-pocket effort (See Chapter 5) can be used to relocate families from the two big is first designated for housing in the nine blocks. (Relocation from the school site should be complete before Stage 1 of the vest-pocket housing is ready, and therefore will have to rely upon other resources, possibly most of the 500 new apartments built in Stage 2. The nine block rebuilding can be considered additions to the housing supply and available as relocation resources for the 390 households displaced by Stage 2, which can then yield 655 new apartments.

If succeeding stages are carefully ordered, they can provide enough new housing at each period to accommodate the tenants of buildings next scheduled for removal. It should be understood that this schedule represents only one set of combinations based on an assessment of present conditions and opportunities and some assumptions on the likely pace of rebuilding. The number of stages and the time span for completion could be expanded to accommodate unforeseen administrative or financial difficulties. As depicted, each stage is developed as a unit. However, each stage is also of the proper size to be developed fractionally as a series of sub-stages, as cited in the discussion of administrative issues. In this case, rebuilding could start simultaneously on several of the designated stages and proceed in various locations in the neighborhood area.

Opposed to the uniformity of housing arrangements and open space offered by the tenements and existing residential block, the plan provides a variety of housing types and open spaces to meet the differing needs of residents. First, along the periphery of the area are four-story walk-ups containing larger apartments, two tiers of duplexes that will give families with children privacy to open space and the outdoors. At intervals top these buildings will be 10 to 14 story towers in which the apartments will be predominantly of the L.S. new apartments almost 40 percent will be in new buildings.

A plan of higher land coverage, a mixture of building types, and a more dispersed, intensive-

ly used open space, with its concomitant advantages of lower costs, has been chosen over the higher costs, more open space, and lower land coverage that a plan of primarily tower buildings would entail. The open space is varied and attractive. Some large areas open directly to the cross streets and other spaces are large building "courtyards." The low buildings define and retain the street space and enclose

the interior space. Since they are only one apartment deep, they provide maximum usable space and natural light for all apartments. The towers are of minimum cross-section, lessening their effect as visual barriers and impediments to sunlight and air for the lower buildings and open space. Most of the open space is contained in the block interiors, affording privacy for both the low and low building. Illustration

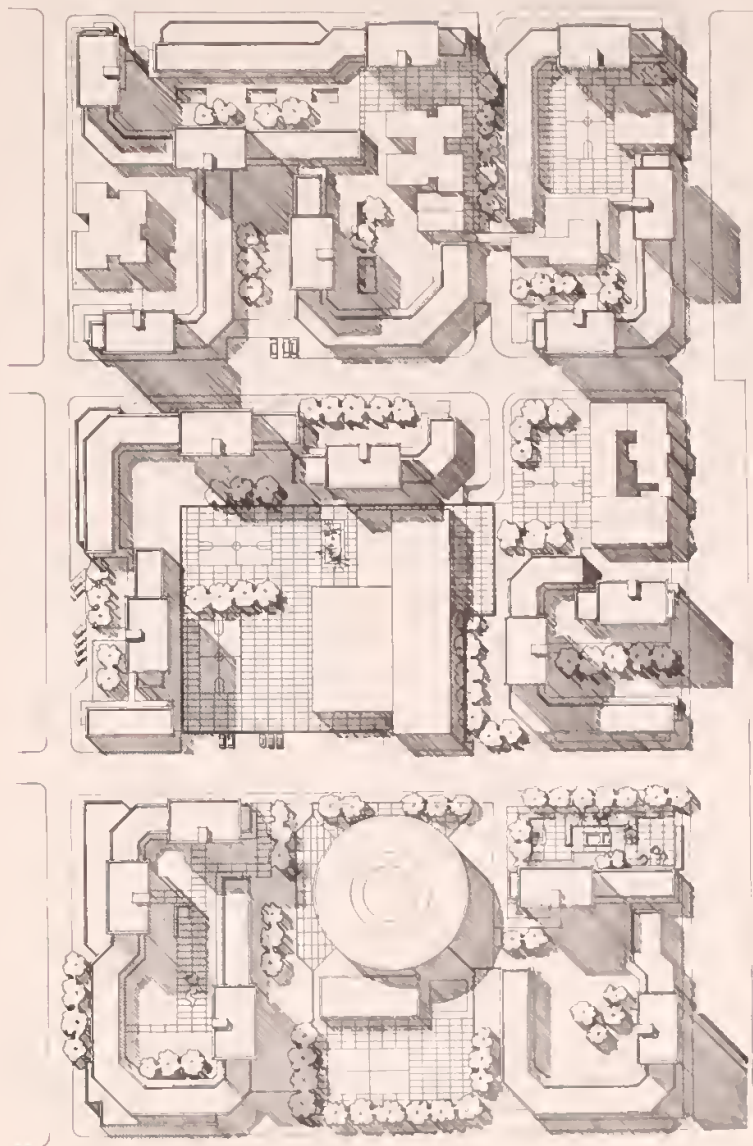


ILLUSTRATION 6 NINE 2 11 ME E 11

7, a cross-section through the rebuilt block, shows the relation of the various building types to the interior spaces.

Parking is already difficult in areas such as this one, and will become even more so through street closings and increased automobile use. For the entire lower East Side existing legal on-street and off-street spaces provide for about one out of 10 households, while about one out of 7 own cars. Over the long term the parking ratio should be about one space to four or five apartments. Therefore 400 to 500 spaces will be required for the rebuilt nine blocks. About 150 street spaces can be counted upon, the remainder will have to be in structures. In addition, a modest amount of curb parking will be provided for the merchants along Clinton Street.

As shown in Illustration 7, there will be platforms at grade or a half-story above grade at certain locations under the open space and low

building, serving as a covering for one-story parking structures. The parking will be at a half or one story below grade, with the platforms offering terraced open spaces shared by housing bordering it. The internal open spaces provided by the platforms and the closed streets connect with east-west streets where pedestrians and vehicular traffic move together, safely.

Sections of Ridge and Attorney Streets will be closed first as play streets and finally as redesigned pedestrian paths. Closing them will redirect through traffic to Clinton and Pitt Streets and Stanton and Rivington Streets.

Map 6, Proposals, is a composite presentation of building proposals that have already been approved by city agencies and those that are firmly recommended or endorsed in this report. Numbers and letters refer to the legend on the facing page. Rather than being described in one chapter the map is referred to in various chapters as different proposals are discussed.

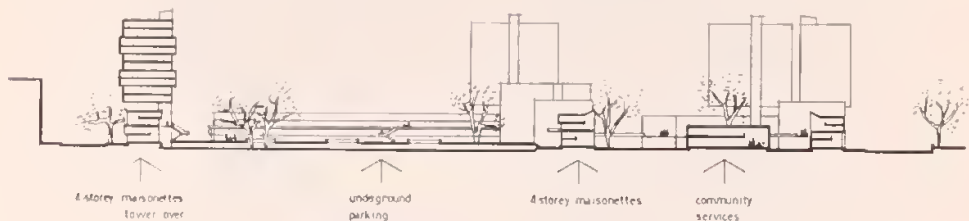


ILLUSTRATION 7

NINE BLOCK REBUILDING
EAST-WEST CROSSSECTION

MAP 6 PROPOSALS LEGEND

APPROVED PROJECTS

HOUSING

Approved Vest-Pocket Projects

1. East 13th to East 14th Streets, Avenues B and C
2. East 12th to East 13th Streets, Avenues B and C
3. East 3rd to East 4th Streets, Avenue C
4. Bowery, Houston and Chrystie Streets
5. Bowery, Houston and Second Avenue
6. Mester, Eldridge and Allen Streets

Other Housing

7. Tanla Towers
8. Division Street at the Bowery

URBAN RENEWAL DESIGNATIONS

9. Two Bridges
10. Seward Park Extension
11. Cooper Square

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Schools

12. Public School 142 (Attorney, Delancey, Ridge and Rivington Streets)
13. Public School 124 (Division Street at the Bowery)
14. Public School 21 (Spring and Mott Streets)
15. Intermediate School 25 (Rivington, Suffolk, Stanton and Norfolk Streets)
16. Seward Park High School Extension

Parks and Playgrounds

17. Market Slip at Cherry Street
18. East 10th Street at Avenue D

Settlement Houses

19. Grand Street Settlement
20. Henry Street Settlement Extension

TRANSPORTATION

21. Parking Garage at Essex Street above Delancey Street
22. New Subway routes on East 14th Street, Avenue C and Houston Street

NEW PROJECTS PROPOSED IN THIS PLAN

MAJOR RENEWAL ACTION

- A. Tompkins Square East
- B. Delancey-Houston Streets
- C. Grand Street
- D. Landfill along East River between Brooklyn Bridge and Rutgers Slip
- E. Bowery Industrial Renewal

Schools

- F. Public School 15 Extension
- G. Intermediate School 131 to replace J.H.S. 65
- H. Elementary School to replace P.S. 42
- I. Public School to replace Public Schools 97 and 188
- J. Intermediate School
- K. Intermediate School
- L. Public School to replace Public Schools 61 and 64
- M. Public School to replace Public Schools 63 and 122 (ECF)

Perks and Playgrounds

- N. Rivington, between Pitt and Ridge (former P.S. 4)
- O. Rehabilitation of East River Park
- P. Perks In Major Action Area (Replacement for Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway)
- Q. Junior High School 71 Playground Extension

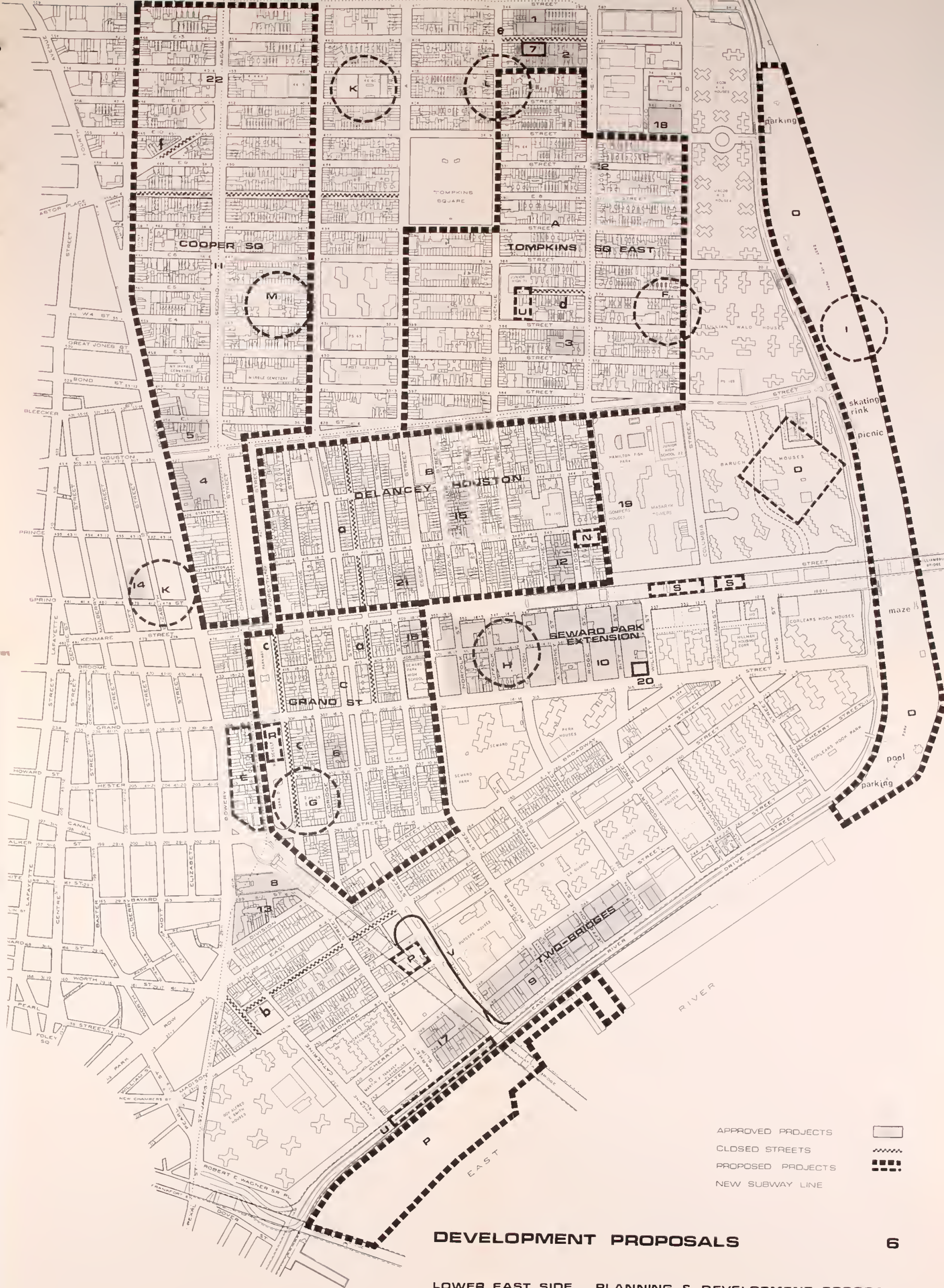
TRANSPORTATION

Off-Street Parking

- R. Chrystie-Forsyth Streets below Grand Street
- S. Under Williamsburg Bridge
- T. Under Manhattan Bridge
- U. Under South Street Viaduct

Circulation

- V. New ramp from Manhattan Bridge to FDR Drive
- W. Street Closings
 - a. Orchard Street
 - b. Oliver and Henry Streets
 - c. Forsyth Street
 - d. East 5th Street
 - e. East 13th Street
 - f. Stuyvesant Street
 - g. St. Marks Place



DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

6

LOWER EAST SIDE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

CITY OF NEW YORK HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CONSULTANTS ABELES, SCHWARTZ AND ASSOCIATES

MAY 1970

4. HOUSING

SUMMARY

The need for replacing the Lower East Side's deteriorated housing supply is immediately obvious even to the most casual observer. However, replacement of the virtually uninhabitable tenements even within 30 or 35 years will not be feasible without a considerably greater commitment of government programs and funds. Although government funds have been used to improve the area's housing for 40 years, programs have not been broad enough to reach the neediest groups, and have concentrated on long-range major improvements, while ignoring the immediate requirements of tenement dwellers.

The area's housing inventory, according to the 1960 Census, shows 52.2 percent in sound condition, 34.6 percent deteriorated, and 13.2 percent dilapidated--figures which are worse than similar areas such as Central Harlem, Bedford-Stuyvesant, and the South Bronx. Moreover, 18.7 percent of all housing was overcrowded, a situation most intolerable in the tenements with their already minimal space allotments per occupant. The presence of large blocks of relatively new project housing makes the inventory breakdown even more bleak in actuality than it appears statistically. Areas III and IV, shown in the accompanying sketch of the study area, are in the worst condition and deserve highest priority in rebuilding.

In 1960 Lower East Side families paid an average of 13 percent of their annual income for rent, although poorer families tended to pay far more (up to 40 percent) than middle-income families, who enjoy greater range and freedom of choice in allocating their income. Median rent was \$50 a month for a four-room tenement apartment, less than the \$16 per room monthly rent in project housing.

The housing supply decreased by about 1,000 between 1960 and 1970 (from 70,591 apartments to 69,370), a seemingly small shift. However, the loss takes on significance in conjunction with the fact that the old tenements sheltering minority groups were replaced by moderate-income housing occupied largely by whites. Since 1910 the area has been virtually abandoned by reputable private real estate. There has been a parallel departure of population, commerce, and industry, leaving a large scattering of abandoned buildings and vacant sites. Three out of ten tenement buildings were found delinquent in real estate tax payments, a sign of landlords' difficulty in making tenements profitable, and of unsound management practices.

Turning to the complex problem of rebuilding, it is clear that because the gap between the

cost of new housing and the ability of residents to pay is so great, a combination of housing subsidies and income supplements must be employed. Housing subsidies come in various usable forms--land writedowns, subsidized interest rates, tax abatements, and special grants to the elderly, to non-profit corporations and business. Income supplements might include rent vouchers, family allowances, larger welfare grants, and changes in the income tax. These methods should be used in diverse combinations to yield the best opportunities for rebuilding. It is strongly recommended that the area not be rebuilt as a public housing enclave, which would only establish an atmosphere as dreary as the present one, and do nothing to solve the sociological problems arising from ghetto life.

Code enforcement as a means of bringing buildings up to standard has not proven effective and should be superseded by more logical approaches. The reasons for the failure of code enforcement are numerous and well-documented: awkward and inefficient administration distributed among many agencies; not enough inspectors; too weak penalties for violators. The underlying reason is that code enforcement's aims are directly opposite those of the landlords, who do not wish to invest more money in a losing venture. Not only are the tenements economically an unsound investment, but through attrition of the market they are owned and managed by the most incompetent landlords, whose pattern of action is to decrease outlays--thus hastening deterioration--and finally to abandon buildings to future in rem proceedings.

In contrast, community ownership of the tenements is suggested as a new and reasonable approach for the hopefully short remaining life span of these buildings. Under a system of ownership vested in a community corporation, the aims of the owners and tenants will be in agreement--alleviation of living conditions. Ownership can be transferred legally under various existing arrangements, preferably before the buildings reach their worst stage of deterioration. Management, and the all-important problem of superintendents, will be improved by community ownership. A program of essential reconditioning under the three aspects of habitability, manageability, and appearance, is outlined.

"Upon the present terms of leaving the poor to be housed at the private landlords, whose interest it is to get the greatest return of money for the money invested, the very poorest must always be housed as they are now. Nothing but public control in some form or other can secure them a shelter fit for human beings." 1895, not 1970, is the year this statement was made; it is doubtless one of the few truths about New York City that have not changed in 75 years.

The need for profound changes in housing conditions on the Lower East Side is manifest. It is hardly necessary to emphasize the impact of poor housing upon tenants in slum buildings. The basic justification for public intervention in housing rests on the importance of decent shelter as a fundamental need and the almost total inability of private investors to satisfy this need in a poverty-stricken neighborhood such as the Lower East Side. Although the variety of social conditions associated with slum living cannot be expected to disappear with the improvement of the physical setting, the housing problem demands a solution in its own right.

Despite the fact that government funds have been used to improve housing on the Lower East Side for 40 years, intolerable living conditions persist because programs have not been wide enough to reach all who need assistance. Replacement of the Lower East Side's tenements within the next 30 to 35 years will not be attainable unless the present level of commitment and administrative capacity is vastly enlarged. Most existing housing programs are focussed upon durable major improvements and offer little temporary aid to those in immediate need. In addition to the major reconstruction, continuing incremental improvement must be offered to all the poorly housed for the immediate future.

*William Dean Howells, in *The Lower East Side: Portal to American Life*, New York, The Jewish Museum, 1966, p. 52.

A variety of programs responding to different existing conditions, community settings, and consumer needs must be available.

Basic to any understanding of the Lower East Side's future as a residential area is a knowledge of the current condition of the housing inventory, recent and projected changes, and the cost of housing to the consumer.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

On the basis of building type, well over half the apartments on the Lower East Side, essentially the unrenovated old law tenements, are generically obsolete and therefore unsound by contemporary standards. Although there have been significant changes in housing inventory during the past decade, the 1960 Census still provides a guide to basic physical conditions and useful data against which to measure change.

Table 14 below shows various housing characteristics for 1960 for the entire Lower East Side and five areas identified in the accompanying sketch.

In 1960 31.2 percent of the over seventy thousand dwelling units on the Lower East Side were dilapidated, and 34.6 percent deteriorating, yielding a total unsound measurement of 47.8 percent. This compares closely to the 53 percent of all dwelling units that were in unrenovated tenements in 1970. Comparable dilapidation and deterioration rates for the city in 1960 were 3 percent and 12 percent. Reflecting the age and decay of the old law tenements, the Lower East Side had a larger share of dilapidated housing than other sections of the city with which it is frequently compared: for example, Central Harlem, Bedford Stuyvesant, and the South Bronx, where the dilapidation rates were 11.1, 6.4, and 5.4 percent respectively. The smallest section, area IV, had the worst housing on the Lower East Side: about 32 percent was sound, and an astonishing 37 percent was dilapidated, by far the highest rate of total housing decay in the community. Close to two-thirds of the units in the largest section, Area I, between Fourth Avenue and Avenue B were unsound, with over half in a deteriorating status. Area II appears in reasonably good condition because of the 3,600 project apartments; if they are withdrawn from the sound inventory, the share of unsound housing jumps from about 40 to 53 percent, more in keeping

TABLE 14

Characteristics of Housing, 1960

Area	Sound	Deteriorating	Dilapidated	Total	Overcrowded
Area I	8,336	12,155	2,226	22,715	2,953
Area II	8,741	4,197	1,534	14,472	3,343
Area III	5,572	5,229	2,410	11,211	2,612
Area IV	1,334	1,317	1,557	4,208	720
Area V	12,859	3,507	1,619	17,985	3,595
Total	36,842 (52.2%)	24,403 (34.6%)	9,346 (13.2%)	70,591	13,223 (18.7%)

Source: U.S. Census, 1960

with conditions as experienced in the past. Similarly, when project housing is deducted from the stock in Area II, the share of unsound housing climbs from 40 to 65 percent. The presence of over nine thousand units in project housing in Area V is similarly indicative of the large share of unsound housing among the remaining units.

OVERCROWDING

Almost one out of five dwelling units were overcrowded (more than one person per room) in 1960 compared to about 14 percent for the city and slightly over 20 percent for the three other comparable communities. Overcrowding varies considerably by area, ranging from 13 percent of all units in Area I to over 23 percent in Area II, between East Houston and Delancey Streets. The effects of overcrowding may well be more onerous and disruptive of personal and family life on the Lower East Side than elsewhere because of the preponderance of old law tenements with their small rooms and generally minimal design standards.

RENTS AND INCOME

Rents for apartments are low when compared to the rest of New York City. In 1960 families on the Lower East Side spent about 13 percent of their annual income for rent, excluding utilities. The comparable figure for the city was about 16 percent. However, this moderate overall figure disguises important differences. A 1966 sample survey of 4,100 households in a nine-block tenement area above Houston Street disclosed a very strong relation between the rent-income ratio and household size. Households of four or more persons with incomes below \$2,300 (one out of five households) paid over 40 percent of their income for rent. At the other extreme, none of the households earning over \$6,500 (ten percent of all households) paid more than 13 percent of their income for rent. Generally, for households earning less than \$4,000 a year the proportion of income paid for rent grew as household size increased, while among higher income groups no such proportionate rising of rents was evident. Clearly, families with larger incomes enjoyed a greater freedom to allocate their income among housing and other expenditures.

Median contract rent (excluding utilities) for a four-room tenement apartment was about \$50 a month, less than the city-wide median for all renter-occupied units in 1960 and about equal to the median for sub-standard apartments, including old law tenements. In 1960, contract rents in public housing in the Lower East Side averaged about \$12 a room per month. For projects completed since 1960 the figure rose to almost \$16 a room per month. The largest rent increases were sustained in moderate-income housing. Rents for monthly charges in the case of cooperatives were \$15 and \$21 per month per room in 1960 for cooperatives and rental units respectively; by 1968 they had risen to about \$27 and \$28 a room.

VACANCIES AND ABANDONMENTS

Special information on the vacancy rate for the Lower East Side is impossible to secure. Educated estimates indicate that in this time of intense housing shortage only between one and two percent of the 69,600 units in occupied, habitable buildings are vacant and available for rental. Surveys in the area also re-

veal that the time at which the units are abandoned is a factor in the time of their abandonment. A great many of them, especially above Mulford Street, will be rent listed under the Multiple Dwelling Law, while others will linger for several years, maintaining the area's old tenement character until they are eventually demolished.

RECENT CHANGES IN THE HOUSING INVENTORY

Between 1960 and 1970 the total number of housing units in occupied residential buildings decreased by slightly over one thousand apartments, from 70,591 in 1960 to 69,370 in 1970. However, this modest decrease disguises significant shifts in the composition of the housing inventory and the consumer it served. In fact, old law tenements sheltering poor whites, Puerto Ricans, and Negroes were replaced mainly by new moderate-income housing predominantly rented by white families. Moreover, these changes took place during a period when the white population declined by 25 percent and the Puerto Rican population grew by one-third. Certainly without the new moderate-income housing to hold and attract whites to the neighborhood the losses among the whites would have been even more severe.

Numerically, as shown on Table 15, close to 10,000 apartments, almost all in low-rent tenements, were lost between 1960 and 1970, over 7,000 of them as a result of urban renewal and other housing projects. Against these losses, 8,773 new apartments were provided, 1,877 (21 percent) low-rent, 6,323 (72 percent) moderate-income rental and cooperative, and 573 (7 percent) high rent. Essentially the large gains in moderate-income housing were achieved at the expense of tenement buildings occupied by poor families. To be sure, housing for moderate-income families was needed and the tenements did demand clearance, but



LOWER EAST SIDE HOUSING IN AREA A

In the context of the Lower East Side the transfer meant losing low-income accommodations without assuring replacement.

REAL ESTATE MARKET

To a significant degree, the Lower East Side has been progressively abandoned since 1910. From 1910 to 1940, the amount of housing available in the area declined by 34 percent. This change was more a result of building disuse and the lessening importance of the Lower East Side as the "portal to America," than of demolition. Through 1944 up to 30 percent of "usable" housing structures stood vacant while the total population decreased by 62 percent. No influx of commerce occurred after the departure of industry from 1900 to the present. Apart from the considerable development of low and moderate-income aided housing, new private construction had ended by 1910. In 1950, total land assessments were 35 percent below the 1910 evaluation, and the area's total tax obligation amounted to only half that of 1910.

In his retrospective analysis of market behavior on the Lower East Side, Leo Grebler concluded that property turnover was relatively slow following the frenetic exchanges of 1900 to 1910. "Real estate market activity...was not associated generally with the short duration of ownership...often ascribed to slum areas." Ownership has evolved from single individuals to realty corporations, resulting in the loss of individual liability and the gain of corporate immunity, and making it harder to prosecute offenders against building, health, and housing codes.

Land disuse is another indicator of a declining area. Grebler underscores this symptom in 1949; two-thirds of all vacant sites, including land vacated by demolition of residential buildings, had been vacant for ten years or more. Even though some of these sites are now being incorporated into the vest-pocket and other scattered site efforts, many of them continue unused, except possibly for parking, and the supply is constantly being replenished by new abandonments.

One of the most revealing indices of market health or weakness is the "consideration" or purchase price of a property expressed as a percentage of its assessed value. From 1962 to 1964, property sale prices rose as high as 130 to 140 percent of assessed value. By June, 1966, sales prices were hovering around the level of assessed value. Another index, the ratio of sales price to annual rent roll, also discloses a declining real estate market: the ratio is down to one and one-half to two times the annual rent roll, from three to four times in former years.

Reputable major realtors report that the downward trend in the market measured in the mid 1960's is continuing and accelerating. Institutional mortgage funds are impossible to obtain, except on some renovated properties, and even most of the secondary lenders have withdrawn. Now mortgage money is available only on a private basis, often at very high terms or from government sources where the investor takes a minimum risk.

Another reflection of a collapsing market is the extent of tax delinquency. The survey of

the nine-block tenement area cited above showed that about three out of ten of the occupied residential buildings were delinquent in real estate taxes and water and sewer charges by at least one year. Delinquency may continue up to seven years with only moderate interest penalties accruing, even though the city may initiate in rem proceedings any time after four years of tax delinquency. The average delinquent property in the surveyed area was about three years in arrears.

The high degree of tax delinquency points to a shrinking profit margin and to relatively desperate, short-sighted efforts by owners to arrest the squeeze. Delinquency may be viewed as a way of deferring costs, for although penalties may be avoided for as long as seven years, they accumulate and inevitably confront the owner. When called to account, the owner is not likely to be in a better economic position than before, moreover, his debts have grown larger while the time allowed for their payment has disappeared. Tax delinquency represents one form of inherently unsound real estate management, a condition common to the Lower East Side.

Since 1910 the Lower East Side has suffered a departure of population, commerce and industry. Capital investment in housing lost value as the result of continuing neglect and a declining response to tenants' demands for services. Today's minority newcomers to the Lower East Side and many of the older white residents live inside an environmental relic. They cannot afford the rents that would economically justify new private construction, tenement rehabilitation or even many of the existing subsidy programs. They also have few immediate prospects.

TABLE 15

Changes in the Housing Inventory: 1960-1970

Number of Housing Units in 1960	70,591
Reasons for Losses in the Housing Inventory	
Urban Renewal and Other Housing Projects	7,145
Schools	862
Other Public Improvements	487
Normal Attrition	1,500
Total Losses	9,994
Reasons for Gains in the Housing Inventory	
Low Rent Housing	1,877
Moderate Rent Housing	6,323
High Rent Housing	573
Total Gains	8,773
<u>Net Change</u>	-1,221
Number of Housing Units in 1970	69,370

Sources: U.S. Census of Housing, 1960
NYCHA, HDA
consultant's calculations

*Leo Grebler, Housing Market Behavior in a Declining Area, New York, Columbia University Press, 1952.

[illegible]

The housing cost gap is wide and the need so great on the lower cost side that both means will have to be used, with the bulk of the assistance going to subsidize the cost of housing. New public housing in Manhattan rents for \$18 to \$20 a room a month, including utilities, or about \$80 a month, which is about what the average tenement dweller in the Lower East Side can afford. However, there are thousands of families, including many small households of elderly people, on fixed incomes, who can only afford about \$50 a month. On the other hand a middle class group of families can afford rents up to \$30 to \$3 per room, or \$150 to \$155 a month for a two-bedroom apartment.

While the great majority of our families in the Lower East would be eligible for public housing, and it is the most reliable means available for providing low income shelter, it would be disastrous if the community were left to make its own provision for all housing. The great majority of the transient population in the Lower East would find no place to live and would be forced to approach the relatively small relief community of the Lower East for temporary shelter. It is our duty, however, about a generation ago, to permit a variety of ways to provide additional housing. Although the excellent community facilities and the improved environment have been a factor in making the Lower East a more desirable place to live in, it is not a sufficient reason for not providing more housing in the Lower East, the rest of the

[illegible]

The community will attract a variety of people, with emphasis on low and moderate-income groups.

Housing built on the Lower East Side will require land write-downs, subsidized interest rates (now as low as zero percent for public housing) and various forms of tax abatement. Direct construction subsidies and special grants, such as the Housing Authority can receive for elderly tenants, will also be needed in many cases. Subsidies should be distributed in various forms and combinations as direct subsidies to housing built by public agencies, as assistance to non-profit or limited-profit community-based housing, and to businesses to encourage them to participate in rebuilding.

In combination with the housing subsidy approach, which is tied to a specific locale and dwelling, various types of income supplements are recommended to give the needy family more flexibility and choice. These can include rent vouchers, already embodied in the leased public housing and rent supplement programs, family allowances, larger welfare grants, changes in the income tax, and other forms of direct payment to the family. Combined with the housing subsidies they could cut the monthly cost of a room to public housing levels of \$18 to \$20 a room, and in maximum combination bring rents, depending on the family, even below public housing charges. These forms of subsidy should also be used to expand home ownership in cooperatives and condominiums.

It should be noted that because of the nature of the housing market and the unequal access to it by the poor and minorities, income supplements may be much less useful than housing subsidies in actually expanding the supply of housing. Simply giving families more disposable income will not assure that the housing market will respond to demand, or that land use and building controls, administrative constraints and the effects of segregation can be overcome.

Considering the tremendous need for housing, the time span required for local redevelopment, and the rate of change in the housing supply, dependent on costs and government assistance, it would not be very helpful to designate specific programs for the Lower East Side. Suffice it to say that needs are enormous and the community will undoubtedly require more housing subsidies than it can count on receiving.

Housing does not exist in a vacuum; consumer choices as to where to live (insofar as possible for poorer residents of the Lower East Side), are not made only on the basis of the size and cost of an apartment, but are closely related to the qualities of the neighborhood: the adequacy of public services, such as schools and parks, and the level at which they are maintained; the level of municipal housekeeping, the extent of social pathologies, such as crime and drug addiction, and their effect on community and family life. Many of these problems will not be resolved by improving the housing. Some may indeed be intensified, as public housing has shown. Obviously, reconstruction of the Lower East Side will demand more than new places to live; it will demand attention to all features that contribute to life in the city.

SOME IMMEDIATE REMEDIES

Most of the tenement apartments will be with us for another one or two decades. While long-term rehabilitation is undesirable, some immediate steps must be taken to make life in the tenements tolerable and to prepare for later changes in housing quality, control and management. The traditional and largely ineffectual remedies, such as code enforcement, must be superseded by new approaches offering some degree of housing improvement now to the thousands of tenement dwellers. The pages below review some of the techniques now used to keep the existing housing habitable, and suggest an evolutionary approach for gaining immediate housing improvements and introducing some of the physical, organizational and operational prerequisites for rebuilding.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

As a remedy to the housing crisis on the Lower East Side, code enforcement has been something less than successful. It has prevented a bad and rapidly worsening situation from utter collapse and, it must be admitted, it has helped under certain circumstances to provide short-term relief to the most pressing problems. There are two reasons why code enforcement has not had and probably will not have a major impact on the Lower East Side's housing. First, its aims are the polar opposite of tenement landlords' aims. Secondly, as an administrative procedure it is unwieldy and inefficient.

As stated earlier, the large majority of tenements housing the poor are usually close to or on the brink of economic collapse. During the last years of a building's usefulness, the owner's prime concern is generally maintaining a cash flow from the building. Any reinvestment in the property is in danger of being lost in case of failure. It is during this period that the number of housing code infractions increases. Obviously, what is demanded of the owner by code enforcement is what he least wants to do—invest money in repairs. Rather, he hopes to make only those investments essential to maintaining tenancy in the building, forestalling foreclosure, and preventing in rem proceedings. What funds remain after such expenses and daily costs are usually taken out as profits. As a result, the violations covered by code enforcement are often the last items to be repaired. Furthermore, in dilapidated buildings there is frequently a form of open warfare between tenants and landlords, one of the landlords' most potent weapons is neglecting to make essential repairs.

The faults of the code enforcement system have been documented and studied for years, culminating in the Grad report of 1964. While administrative improvements have been made, the demands of the situation have usually outstripped such improvements. To begin with, responsibility for inspection is scattered among a number of agencies besides the Department of Buildings. Yet there never seem to be enough inspectors for all complaints received. Since inspection must take place before any legal proceedings are possible, this is a major drawback. In the interval between complaint and inspection, the

original situation. Then, when a violation has been made, months can pass before the matter actually comes up in Tenant-Landlord or Criminal Court. Over the years, landlords' attorneys have developed delaying tactics into a fine art. In new building violations, the costs of delay are normally pressed in for ups, and the costs of delay are low. Finally, when a violation reaches the courts, the verdict amounts to no more than a reprimand to the landlord. In cases of multiple violations, the fine may be less than two dollars per violation, which, for the landlord, is preferable to making the repairs. For the tenant with a falling ceiling, a two dollar fine for the landlord is no justice.

Though procedures have become more effective recently, and occasionally the courts do take a firm stand on violations, landlords still have a final escape from code enforcement. Since each building is run as an individual corporation, the owner can always sell his building to another corporation.

In sum, for the large tenement areas of the Lower East Side, code enforcement as it exists is a weak tool for ameliorating conditions. Only a major overhaul of the entire system, especially the method of enforcement, could improve its effectiveness.

REUSING THE TENEMENT

What to do with the existing, generally sub-standard housing is one of the critical housing policy questions facing the Lower East Side. At the current and anticipated rates of renewal and rehabilitation, tenement housing will affect the lives of more people than all the recently built and proposed housing for the coming decades. As stated earlier, there are approximately 35,000 tenement apartments needing replacement. Nearly all are privately owned. A few, either through abandonment or tax proceedings, are under the control of the City. For a variety of reasons, traditional rehabilitation is inappropriate. However, the most optimistic projections for demolition and replacement of these units is at an average rate of not more than 1,000 per year. Neither historical precedent nor current indications suggest that the necessary financial or administrative resources will be forthcoming to accelerate this rate. It is unfortunately safe to say that most of the existing tenement housing will remain for at least the next twenty years, and will be a dominating factor in determining the quality of life in the community. Indeed, at the projected rate of replacement, it will be well into the next century before the last old law tenement has been removed.

Several recent reports have examined the economic structure of operating tenement housing, and have reached the overriding conclusion that the tenements are no longer economically viable. Current operating costs and rental income do not yield a favorable return on the investment or the necessary funds for maintenance and repairs. In view of the decreasing rate of return and the uncertainties of management, few, if any, qualified real estate operators and little long-term investment are attracted to the tenements. Many owners have left the field. The few remaining owners who try to provide decent housing and still make a profit find the experience increasingly difficult. As the more qualified owners leave the tenements, they become concentrated in the hands of the least capable owners, who run them on a short-term basis, seeking a quick return on a minimal in-

vestment. For them, it is a matter of how long the investment will last, and relatively little concern for the quality of the living conditions.

Many of the living conditions, for example, heating, hot water, and sewer fixtures, have increased dramatically in recent years. The only areas in which the owner can reduce out to balance his outlay are maintenance, repairs, replacement, and management. Thus, instead of investing in these vital areas to maintain their quality, the owner has been forced to increase outlay for maintenance to obtain some income from their properties. Consequently, the less spent on maintenance, the higher the building deterioration, operating costs, and the corresponding rate of return. The next step is a raised tax structure, the next age default, foreclosure proceedings, and finally abandonment or in rem proceedings.

It is during this period of the tenements' death-rattle that tenants suffer the worst conditions. For, given the almost total shortage of alternative housing for low-income families, such buildings tend to remain fully occupied during their decline.

In sum, the economic future for most of the tenements is bleak or non-existent. Given rising operating costs, tenant's inability to pay higher rents, and the loss of confidence by reliable investors, no improvement in the existing situation can be anticipated. In fact, it can be expected that the decline of the tenement as a decent place to live will continue at an ever increasing rate.

During the 1950's and early 1960's the poor condition of the tenements was believed to be primarily a result of non-compliance with housing regulations. It was assumed that through public intervention, the decline of the tenements could be reversed or at least halted. Thus a series of programs and new landlord-tenant laws were instituted, the most important of these being code enforcement, area service programs, emergency repair, and the recivership program. The Spigel Act (Social Welfare Law, Sec. 143-G), the 755 Order (RPAPL Sec. 755), and Article 7-A (the so-called Rent Strike Law) were enacted in the hope that when official programs failed, perhaps tenant and community sanctions could prevail on landlords to improve and maintain their buildings.

While all of these approaches have had some limited success, their achievements are few, and are lost in the continuing and overwhelming physical decline of tenement housing. Experience to date suggests that both official public remedies and private remedies are directed to the symptoms of the problem rather than the root causes. By now it is clear that programs like code enforcement, emergency repairs, and even tenant action, will not, over the long run, achieve meaningful results unless the money, operational talent, and will are available to improve the buildings. Not only must these factors be invested in a building, but they must be sustained continually if the building is to continue as a decent residence.

Community Control

A resolution of the problem of the tenements requires a new approach and program. In cases where private ownership is no longer providing the resources for decent maintenance, ownership should be transferred to a new owner whose goal is not profit but the successful operation of

housing as a matter of public policy. It is suggested that ownership be vested in a corporation or association with its roots in the community. The ownership change could occur in a number of ways. If buildings are essentially abandoned but suitable for continued use, they could be transferred to a housing corporation through municipal or legal action. Laws and regulations do so already exist.

While abandoned or city-controlled housing can be passed to a local housing corporation at little or no cost, it is preferable to transfer the ownership before buildings reach this critical phase. The greatest and most expensive damage in buildings occurs between one and five years before abandonment or in rem proceedings. It is in this stage that fires break out, the heating system is damaged, and the utilities break down. Once these things have occurred, the chances for successful and rapid restoration, from an economic point of view, become remote. While the acquisition price will be higher if buildings are conveyed to a community corporation before abandonment, there will be a considerable savings in repair expenses and time. If landlords are willing to sell, passage of title could take place in the usual way, with a price determined through appraisal and negotiation. When it appears that the continued mismanagement of a property will result in the vacating and demise of the building, ownership should change by condemnation. Because it is in the welfare of the tenants to preserve the existing housing stock, the misuse of housing should become a grounds for prompt condemnation proceedings.

Once a building has changed hands, an immediate policy decision about its future life must be made, based on the larger development plan for the community. Where early demolition for new housing or another use is proposed, the policy should be to vacate. But where development plans do not include the building for a specified number of years, then the capital investment in improving it should be proportionate to its projected life.

While it will not always be possible to achieve a total equilibrium between capital costs of improvements and the projected span of a building's use, the effort will be practical in several ways. Besides the fact that it is simple common sense, it also will help to lower capital costs, by increasing the maintenance expenses during the final years of use. Moreover, in this way new and unregulated investment in a building will not necessitate continued use and occupancy past the planned date of demolition.

Building improvements can be divided into three classes. While the distinctions between various levels of improvement are not clear-cut, classification can illuminate an important feature of the proposed type of holding action.

The first class is rehabilitation in the traditional New York manner, and involves vacating the building, stripping it down to bearing walls and joists, re-arrangement of interior floors, and general improvements designed to meet the needs of a twenty to forty-year mortgage period. Costs are usually between 60 and 75 percent of the cost of a new and similar building, twelve to eighteen months can elapse from commitment to occupancy. This kind of costly, full-scale rehabilitation is obviously suited to buildings appropriate for long-term retention, and not to the interim life of the tenements of the

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At the other extreme is limited maintenance improvement in a basically sound building, intended to ensure and facilitate a building's continued use. It was this type of improvement that it was hoped code enforcement or T-A proceedings would produce; it was found ineffectual, given the dilapidated condition of many of the tenements and the opposing goals of their landlords.

In between these two extremes is a level and type of housing improvement which can be called reconditioning. Under such a program, the necessary investments are made for the repairs that will allow the building to serve for a determined period of time under conditions of normal maintenance. While in some instances the level of reconditioning may exceed the building's life expectancy under the development plan, the approach in general will result in a rational housing investment policy. In some cases, on the other hand, especially where there are serious problems in a building's mechanical system, the costs may make retention of the building financially unsound and prohibitive.

Essential reconditioning is a new concept in housing programs. Until recently the emphasis has been on either new housing or major rehabilitation, based on the assumption that every tenant is entitled to good housing and that anything less is unacceptable. Laudable as this assumption is, it ignores the quite real fact that the resources to provide good housing do not exist or are not forthcoming. In practice, with no compromise alternative to new housing or rehabilitation, the result has been neglect, which is worst of all from the tenants' point of view. There is no reason to believe that in the near future drastic improvements will be made in the current housing situation for low and moderate-income families.

Furthermore, given the time lags and financial complexities of our administrative structure, it is impossible to demolish large areas and rebuild without destroying the community in the process. One of the basic concepts in reconditioning, taking into account the realities of the Lower East Side, is that for any given amount of housing dollars available, far more families will benefit by interim improvement than by demolition and new construction. Equally important, reconditioning will help preserve the community from complete destruction and abandonment during the decades of renewal and rebuilding.

As essential as reconditioning is the maintenance and management program established after buildings have been improved. One of the root causes of the local housing crisis is the very low level of management resources and skills applied to Lower East Side housing. While the reasons for this management failure are numerous, two important ones are lack of money for adequate staff and the absence of skilled management organizations. Under the reconditioning program it is assumed that by the time buildings have been repaired and re-financed with "low-cost" mortgages, the foundations for effective management will have been laid. For, once a sufficient number of buildings are ready, a management organization of the proper size and scope can be established to operate such housing as a unit.

If a large enough number of buildings are managed by one corporation, then adequate economic means for effective management will be

available. Only this arrangement can provide the instant attention on these tenement buildings need. Again, a large number of buildings will provide the economic leverage necessary to effect savings in purchasing services and supplies.

Finally, a broad-based management operation can obtain and retain qualified staff, perhaps the most crucial lack of tenements today. Superintendents can be hired, and their responsibilities distributed, in such a way that if an individual superintendent is unable to work, the building can still receive the necessary daily care. Community corporation management can also enhance employment opportunities. With its adequate operating budget and sensible allocation of duties, it can produce useful positions of responsibility instead of what are today marginal and dead-end jobs.

A program of community corporation control and selective reconditioning not only benefits tenants but also helps prepare the way for redevelopment. As has been shown above, effective renewal on the Lower East Side must take place on ample parcels of land, involving difficult discriminations between areas suitable for retention, rehabilitation, or demolition and rebuilding. In order to keep the renewal process in motion, its administration must be in a position to deal intelligently with the highly sensitive factors of relocation and acquisition. Under the program outlined here, the renewal agency will be dealing with a single owner--the community corporation--with a vested interest in successful renewal, rather than with many private owners whose interest is personal gain.

Thus, by the cooperation of the corporation ownership and the renewal agency, a considerable savings of time and resources will be possible. For example, though successful relocation is basically a function of available relocation resources, it can be assisted by limiting the rental of apartments as they become vacant shortly before the start of renewal and relocation. The operating deficit incurred in leaving apartments vacant can be made part of the urban renewal costs. This is a major aspect of a more comfortable--for tenants and administration--relocation program that could only happen under unified ownership.

Objectives and Costs

Since no program of this type has yet been undertaken, accurate cost data are not available. However, a 1966 study by Mobilization for Youth on reconditioning under community corporation control provides some indication of the possible range of costs. Twenty-six buildings, a representative sample by building type, structural condition, and size, were examined by a contractor experienced in rehabilitation. Wherever possible a roof to cellar inspection was conducted. Costs estimates were based on the 1966 local prevailing costs of labor, materials, and

first materials, and the cost of the work was based on the following rates:

Habitability

Repairs should make the building weather-tight, free of rodents, and safe, so that the basic services will function for the building's lifetime. A quality building will help ease tenant frustration over housing conditions. The major repairs in this category will be made to the exterior walls, roof, fire escapes, and the entrance porch, heating, and utility systems. In the apartments, ceilings, floors, walls, windows, and heating, plumbing, and electrical fixtures and installations should receive attention.

Manageability

The aim should be to bring the building to a condition where they can be efficiently managed and maintained for the well-being of their tenants after reconditioning. The improvements in this category are in the public areas and service building entrances (doorways, mailboxes), public passages (stairway and hall apartment entrances (doors, locks), and refuse collection and sanitation services.

Appearance

Tenements betray their age and accumulated misuse at first glance by the drabness of their facades and by their unattractive entrances. Reconditioning must be concerned with the appearance of buildings, both for the morale of the tenants, who may need more than bare repairs, to overcome cynicism and apathy, and for the neighborhood as a whole, in which long overdue changes are needed in the drab and depressing physical atmosphere. The work here would include cleaning and/or painting the front facade, fire escapes, and exterior windows and entrances.

The cost calculations included the following items: acquisition of building, cost of processing, basic improvements, new fixtures, 10 percent contingency factor, 14 percent inflationary factor, and builder's profit and overhead. Acquisition cost, based on prior real estate studies and on the current market rate of two to two and one-half times annual rental, was \$1,250 to \$1,500 per apartment. Construction costs for improvements, including new fixtures, varied from \$1,350 to \$2,350 per unit. The total range of costs per apartment, including all expenditures, was from \$1,500 to \$5,500. Assuming a 40 percent increase in costs since 1966, the current range would be from \$4,900 to \$7,700 per unit.

Considering the reasonable share of income that most families living in tenements are paying, it should be possible to support these costs mainly out of tenant payments. Modest subsidies, which could come in the form of tax abatement, grants to defer acquisition and remodeling costs and rent supplements, would still be needed to make the venture feasible.

5. THE VEST POCKET HOUSING PROGRAM

SUMMARY

The vest-pocket approach was applied to the Lower East Side primarily because of the severe shortage of available land, and the enormous relocation problem facing urban renewal in a densely settled neighborhood. Rather than raze large, densely populated districts, leaving families homeless and the neighborhood disrupted, it was decided to begin rebuilding the Lower East Side on small scattered sites carefully selected to meet certain important criteria.

Planning for the vest-pocket program and choosing the eight Stage I sites was done in cooperation with local community groups and leaders. By March, 1970, the sites had been approved by the City Planning Commission and the Board of Estimate, and land acquisition and relocation procedures had begun.

Sites were deliberately chosen in better areas, or at the edge of blighted areas, so that new housing would not be immediately engulfed by adverse conditions. Visible locations, preferably near other recent or planned improvements, were favored, to reinforce the residents' trust in the City's commitment, and to stimulate investment. Naturally sites having fewest families or businesses to relocate were most desirable. Other specific criteria were that sites should have a regular shape, be as close to an acre as possible, and have a reasonable cost.

Together, the six Stage I sites yield a total of 1,605 four and one-half room apartments or 1,450 five-room apartments. On Sites 4 and 5 plans were made to correlate with the Cooper Square Early Action Plan, which the community and their consultant have developed over a period of years.

The Lower East Side's tenements are so overcrowded that rebuilding at the present zoning density of R-7 would mean a considerable loss of apartments, precisely the opposite of our goal. It is therefore recommended that, to the extent possible, rebuilding take place at an average residential density about twenty percent higher than the present zoning. Such a category is already being used in the Seward Park Extension Urban Renewal Project.

The thorniest problem involved in renewing the Lower East Side is, of course, relocation. The vest-pocket program has been designed in closely coordinated stages in order to cope as effectively and humanely as possible with this

situation. Stage I relocatees will mostly move to public housing, the sites chosen for Stage I above have relatively few residents and figures show that nearly all can be accommodated in public housing. Stage I new housing should be seen primarily as providing housing for Stage II relocatees.

Because the latter relocatees will have enough new housing awaiting them, the range of choice for Stage II rebuilding sites, both in size and level of density, will be broader than it was for Stage I. In other words, by Stage II the City can begin making inroads in eliminating some of the worst slum housing in the area, and changing the character, appearance, and spirit of the Lower East Side.

PLANNING FOR THE VEST POCKET PROGRAM.

Planning for the vest-pocket program began during the summer of 1968 when the consultant contacted almost one hundred separate organizations plus key individuals, such as elected officials and directors of local service agencies, in order to explain the nature of the vest-pocket program contemplated for the Lower East Side. As interest in the program crystallized, arrangements were made to hold meetings in various sections of the community to initiate the planning. At these introductory meetings, attended by both representatives of organizations and individuals, the purpose and scope of the vest-pocket housing program and the desirability of other improvements, such as small parks and street closings, were discussed. Although the program was generally well received, many comments at these sessions betrayed an underlying skepticism about the extent of the city's commitment to start rebuilding of the Lower East Side. Other, more specific questions revolved around the appearance and rent levels of the new housing, how relocation would be handled and on what basis tenants would be selected. Although the city's commitment to the Lower East Side was reiterated, it was only during the ensuing months of planning that tangible assurances and realistic answers acceptable to community groups emerged.

As a result of the initial meetings in September, 1968, arrangements were made for a second series of meetings where the work of selecting housing sites and considering other aspects of the vest-pocket program would begin. At these meetings, held during the Fall of 1968, community representatives and the consultants settled upon a general approach for the vest-pocket program and criteria for considering eligible sites and selecting specific locations. Walking tours of the community and consideration of the value of numerous locations yielded lists of possible sites. These lists provided sites for two to three times the number of apartments that could reasonably be built, permitting review and selection by the community and a wide margin for discussion with city agencies. As specific sites were reviewed and given tentative local approval, they were checked for economic feasibility with representatives of the Housing and Development Administration and the New York City Housing Authority.

By May, 1969, an initial set of sites had been carefully reviewed for locational, technical and development feasibility by community groups, consultants and city agencies and forwarded to the Housing and Development Administration for formal submittal to the City Planning Commission and the Board of Estimate. By March, 1970, six sites (Items 1 to 6 on Map 6, Proposals), composing Stage I of the vest-pocket program, had been approved and land acquisition and relocation procedures had begun.

SELECTING SITES FOR VEST POCKET HOUSING

The inescapable reality of trying to find land for new housing on the Lower East Side is that there are few usable building sites. Map 5 (Development Opportunities) shows on a composite basis those parcels--vacant lots and parking lots, abandoned, underused and small buildings, and buildings in poor condition--that could be considered available land for building. Although there are many separate scattered parcels, only a limited number can be combined into buildable sites. Also, while there are large blocks of housing in poor structural condition, many of the buildings are still inhabited, making it impossible to rebuild them without massive relocation.

Despite the scarcity of buildable sites, some discretion can be exercised in selecting locations for a vest-pocket housing program. All the new housing sites, and sites for other improvements as well, emerged from consideration of the development possibilities shown on Map 5. Related criteria, reflecting the character of the community and the nature of the rebuilding process that were used to select sites are

1. General Location
Normally sites would be located in the midst of extensive areas of poor housing not isolated from the mainstream of the community, where they might be engulfed by the surrounding conditions. If vest-pocket housing could be located within or near the few sound districts or along the edges of blighted areas, it would help inhibit the spread of deterioration and make some inroads into areas of poor housing. In some cases sites along major streets, such as East 14th Street, were advocated so that rebuilding could start where it would be most visible and help stimulate investment that could benefit from local strength.

2. Relation to Other Development
Sites were considered particularly advantageous if they were near other recent or impending community improvements, such as new housing or a school. Thus sites along East 14th Street are next to a new middle-income housing cluster. The intention was to create points of relative stability and strength by associating new housing with other public investments.

3. Extent of Relocation
Obviously the vest-pocket program would be self-defeating if it demolished more apartments than it built. Therefore, it was important to minimize relocation by selecting sites that contained few families and businesses.

4. Size and Configuration of the Sites
The economics of housing construction suggested that about one hundred and fifty apartments should be developed on each site which, at the prevailing zoning, meant a plot of about an acre. Also, the most usable sites were rectangular in shape and went through a block from street to street or consisted of the end of a block.

5. Land Costs
Since a limited amount of city funds was available for land acquisition, the general rule was that the average assessed value for site should not exceed \$15.00 a square foot for both land and improvements.

6. Provision for Future Development
A rather important criterion was that sites be chosen so that irregular, unusable parcels would not remain on a block. Several sites were delineated with the understanding that adjoining remaining parcels would be incorporated into the program at later stages.

7. Clustering of Sites
Insofar as possible, sites were grouped, especially if they were of minimal size. Again, this would permit some discernible inroads to be made on existing conditions and lessen the chances of the new housing being overwhelmed by adverse local circumstances.

The cumulative effect of these criteria was to limit the selection of sites to locations along the edges of blighted sections where new housing could be an anchor and stimulate subsequent stages of rebuilding, and also to several scattered sites that offered unique opportunities for renewal.

THE VEST POCKET HOUSING PROGRAM STAGE I

The table below indicates the location chosen, size, extent of relocation and the number of new units each site could accommodate.

Slightly more than twelve acres of land on the six separate sites shown on Map 6 are proposed for the first stage of a vest-pocket housing program. These sites are now a mixture of vacant lots, vacant and underused buildings and deteriorating tenements, plus some sound buildings that were incorporated to create usable parcels. A total of 670 households, sixty percent residing on one's to, and 96 small businesses and other non-residential occupants (e.g., storefront churches) will be displaced to accommodate between 1,450 and 1,605 new apartments, de-

pending on the average size of the apartment

East Fourteenth Street, the northern edge of the Lower East Side, separates the community from a much more prosperous and stable neighborhood typified by Stuyvesant Town, a large, private, essentially white housing project built in the 1940's. Fourteenth Street east of Third Avenue is a lively shopping street for the disparate neighborhoods north and south of it. Near its eastern end, where the shopping tends to fade out, are two blocks extending south to 12th Street where two sites have been designated.

Sites 1 and 2: This pair of sites occupies the bulk of the two large blocks between 12th and 14th Streets and Avenues B and C. In typical Lower East Side fashion, the sites are now occupied by deteriorating and dilapidated residential tenements interspersed with vacant lots and inhospitable commercial activities such as trucking. Many of the commercial enterprises occupy unsound structures

TABLE 16

Vest-Pocket Housing Program: Stage I

Site Information: Relocation and New Housing

Site Designation	Location	Square Feet	Relocation		Estimated Units Permitted by Zoning	
			Households and Individuals	Non-Residential	4 1/2 Rms.	5 Rms.
1	East 13 to 14 Sts. Aves. B to C	85,200	421	24	260	235
2	East 12 to 13 Sts. Aves. B to C	102,900			315	285
3	East 3 to 4 Sts. Ave. C	52,800	62	5	160	145
4	Bowery, Houston, Chrystie Sts.	129,000	42	26	400	360
5	Bowery, Houston, Second Ave.	114,000	56	18	350	315
6	Hester, Eldridge, Allen Sts.	39,500	116	23	120	110
Totals		523,400	670	96	1,605	1,450

and do not have adequate off-street parking or loading.

Designated for low-rent public housing, these sites can accommodate 520 apartments averaging 5 zoning rooms (2 1/2 bedrooms) per apartment. However, to meet the needs of the many large families in the neighborhood, efforts will be made by the Housing Authority to build apartments averaging 5 1/2 zoning rooms or three bedrooms. The size of these sites, their location along a wide street and the high relocation burden are persuasive reasons for changing the zoning from the present R-7 to R-8. Closing a portion of 13th Street to create a cul-de-sac would make a zoning increase even more desirable from the point of view of land capacity and an optimal distribution of building bulk. Under this higher density up to 855 five-room apartments could be built.

All recent new housing near these sites has been in the middle-income range: Stuyvesant Town across 14th Street and the new Haven Plaza east of Avenue C. Low-rent accommodations are needed in this neighborhood for families now living in exceedingly poor housing, and as an affirmation of the city's intention that this desirable section of Manhattan will continue to be shared by the poor and the middle-class.

A recent relocation survey indicates the extent of deprivation and housing need on these blocks and probably reflects conditions in many of the nearby tenement blocks. Over half (55 percent) of the 421 families claimed welfare or social security as their main source of income. A surprising 86 percent of all families are eligible for public housing, with eight out of ten preferring to stay in the neighborhood. Quite a few large and small households are eligible for public housing: 16 percent have 6 or more persons, and an equal proportion are single persons over 50 years old. Almost all of the latter group are white (non-Puerto Rican), while the larger families are Puerto Rican. Sixty percent of the people on the blocks are Puerto Rican and 31 percent are white.

If the present schedule is met, land acquisition will start early in 1970 and a buildable site will be turned over to the Housing Authority a year later. New housing will be available two years from then, or early in 1973.

Site 3: (East 3rd to 4th Sts., Ave C) This site within the heart of the Lower East Side is now occupied by a row of small, old residential buildings (along Fourth Street), tenements, an addiction services building, a post office and a gas station/parking lot fronting on Third Street. Low-income public housing will be built on the site, specified at 145 apartments averaging five zoning rooms, but likely to increase to 5 1/2 rooms to accommodate large families. As with the previous sites, increasing the zoning density would permit more families to benefit immediately from new housing and ease the problems of future relocation. This site will be developed simultaneously with Sites 1 and 2.

Site 4: (Bowery, Houston, Chrystie Sts.) This site, the largest piece of vacant (or mostly vacant) land on the Lower East Side, is the keystone of the plan for Cooper Square. Designated for low and moderate income hous-

ing, the site will include a day care center, shops, and possibly a small K-2 school. The Cooper Square plan is self-contained in that much of the new housing built in Stage 1, for which fewer than 80 residential tenants will have to move, is designated for families moving during Stage II. As many of the displaced families will require public housing, as much public housing as possible should be built on this site. Also, since many of the households in the Cooper Square area are small (60 percent contain 1 or 2 persons, compared to less than 40 percent for tenants living on Sites 1 and 2), new apartments with an average of 4.5 zoning rooms (two bedrooms) should be sufficient. The attributes of this site—its convenient location, exceptionally large size and blockfront shape—and the prevalence of smaller families further justify an increase in the zoning density.

Site 5: (Bowery, Houston and Second Ave.) This site, which now has 36 residential tenants and 18 businesses, is designated for 350 units of housing: a mixture of low and moderate rent. As with Site 4, local housing needs and family sizes are such that apartments with an average of 2 bedrooms should be sufficient. The zoning capacity should be increased to provide some early respite from the community-wide housing shortage and meet the particular needs of Cooper Square. This development will also include shops, public services and possibly the K-2 school advocated by many residents.

As the Cooper Square sites have been carefully considered for several years, some excerpts from the Early Action Plan for the area will help explain their concept:

"A joint development of these sites 14 and 5 may take place with coordinated design leading to a mixture of public housing and middle-income housing both north and south of Houston Street.

"The general design concept to be followed is a six-story development on the periphery of these blocks, with towers set back to fill in the zoning envelope as needed. In the interiors will be underground parking, with decking above to provide large interior open spaces and pedestrian walks. A pedestrian bridge is to link sites 6 and 7 over Houston Street.

"In conjunction with this development, space will be provided for a new church or day care facility, the latter a portion of which will be developed as the community facilities portion of the public housing. A K-2 school is also proposed. Finally, shops and other community spaces are to be provided both north and south of Houston Street on the ground floor of the buildings."

"New York Times, Cooper Square, p. A 1
Plan, August, 1969.

Site 6 (Hester, Eldridge and Allen Sts.) Finding suitable sites in the Two Bridges neighborhood was extraordinarily difficult. Even in the heavily blighted area between Canal and Grand Streets east of Forsyth Street where there are many vacant buildings and small lots, it was hard to find sites of an appropriate size and dimension where relocation was not excessive. After many site visits and hours of deliberation with the Two Bridges Neighborhood Council, one site with a combination of vacant and underused buildings and occupied tenements was selected. It now contains 116 families and 23 businesses, and will accommodate about 120 low-rent apartments. As the site is too small to be built directly by the Housing Authority, it will be developed through the turnkey public housing procedure. Arrangements have been made for a large savings bank to furnish the construction financing and for the Housing Authority to purchase the completed project and operate it as low-rent public housing.

The following table shows the estimated costs

of Stage I for the vest-pocket program.

Total costs for the 1,605 apartments, assuming that the present zoning is not exceeded, will be \$9,728,000 or \$6,200 per apartment. This figure will be brought down to about \$5,400 when the proceeds from selling the land are deducted.

As discussed earlier, the Lower East Side's tenement districts are so densely built up that residential density for the tenement blocks averages close to 240 units per acre that long-term renewal at the prevailing R-7 zoning, which permits a maximum of 135 two-bedroom apartments per acre, threatens to bring about a massive loss of apartments and a severe housing shortage. In order to avoid this situation but also provide relief from the oppressive densities that now overwhelm the Lower East Side, the present zoning density should be increased. Under the R-8 zoning category up to 220 apartments can be built on an acre, with the maximum density attained in a building of about 20 storeys. This density is considered excessive for fami-

TABLE 17
Vest-Pocket Housing Program: Stage I
Site Information: Costs

Site Designation	Estimated Costs				
	Acquisition (a)	Household Relocation (b)	Non-household Relocation (c)	Demolition (d)	Total Project Cost
1	1,530,000				
2	1,635,000	421,000	96,000		3,682,000
3	958,000	62,000	20,000		1,040,000
4	1,050,000	42,000	104,000		1,196,000
5	1,896,000	36,000	72,000		2,004,000
6	810,000	116,000	92,000		1,018,000
Totals	\$7,879,000	\$677,000	\$384,000	\$788,000	\$9,728,000 (e)
(a) Assumed at 160 percent of assessed value					
(b) Assumed at \$1,000 per family					
(c) Assumed at \$4,000 per establishment					
(d) Assumed at 10% of acquisition cost					
(e) Includes estimate of demolition cost					

ly living on the Lower East Side. As illustrated elsewhere, a much more tolerable living situation can be obtained with a density of about 165 apartments per acre. Although such a zoning category does not now exist, it should be noted that the large Seward Park Extension Urban Renewal project is being built at about this equivalent. Extension of this density to much of the Lower East Side would be entirely appropriate and, indeed, an almost imperative expression of the City's development policy for the community.

RESIDENTIAL RELOCATION. STAGE I

It would not be an exaggeration to say that except for the persistent shortage of funds, problems stemming from family relocation have been the most serious impediment to the completion of urban renewal plans. In an era when all urban housing, and especially low-income shelter, is scarce, it becomes extremely difficult to carry out renewal plans that are dependent upon finding "decent, safe and sanitary" housing at reasonable rents for the families who are displaced.

On the Lower East Side the formidable task of relocation is compounded by the paucity of vacant land on which new housing can be built. Indeed, the difference between high densities of the tenement blocks and the lower zoning densities permitted for new construction often means that more families will be put out of old housing than can be accommodated in new. Major public improvements are also affected by the scarcity of land and prevailing densities. For example, building a much-needed new school can mean that several hundred families will have to move to other quarters that will often be hard to find, too costly, or in worse condition than those they left.

To a large degree it was because of the hardships of large-scale relocation that the vest-pocket approach was conceived. By emphasizing smaller, underused or vacant sites for new housing, it seeks to lessen relocation problems by matching limited displacement with a ready supply of relocation housing. Nevertheless it is still necessary to measure relocation needs against rehousing resources, because the housing supply is limited and there are competing demands for it. In order to match relocation needs against housing resources a three-year span encompassing 1970-1972 was used. During this period a significant amount of displacement and new residential construction will take place and reasonably good estimates of supply and demand can be made.

What might be termed the principal policies or constraints of a relocation plan can be described as follows:

1. Socially, the "merit" of a site for tenement dwelling, except for the fact that it has been rehabilitated, public housing will constitute the best relocation resource for families and individuals displaced by the development on the Lower East Side.

2. A site tenant will have priority for public housing. He will have priority for existing public housing at the time that he acquires the dwellings.

3. Vacancies in existing public housing on the Lower East Side and new units that are completed during the relocation period will be available to all sites. Every effort will be made to accommodate the people in the preferences of the tenants.

4. Site tenants will have first priority for admission to the new housing built on the site no matter where they move when the new housing is being built.

The Lower East Side is in a fortunate position in regard to using public housing for relocation. Except for Rutgers Houses and a few existing public housing consists of other projects where the rents are between \$11 and \$17 a month per room, including utilities. Assuming an average of \$15 a room for 4 1/2 rooms, the monthly rent would be between \$68 and \$70, which is just about the rent for a normal Lower East Side tenement apartment. If families pay one-fifth of their income for rent, they should be earning approximately \$4,000 a year to afford 4 1/2 rooms. In an existing public housing project, slightly over half of all families on the Lower East Side are estimated to have earned over this in 1964.

Larger, wage-earning families with low income and families depending on social security pension, estimated at one-quarter of all total relocates, may well have difficulty affording even the low rents in existing public housing. A share of them may have to seek supplementary public assistance funds that they are to get into public housing.

Paradoxically, families on full welfare (e.g., ADC) will not have any difficulty affording public housing, since payment of their rent is assured by the Department of Social Services. Therefore, an economical workable policy may be to offer the working poor with larger families and elderly people apartment. In the older, less costly public housing, at those on welfare, estimated at 20 to 25 percent of Stage I relocates, quarters in the newer public housing.

The need for relocation resources and the projected sources of supply for Stage I (1970-72) are estimated in the following table:

In the aggregate there is a "balance" between relocation needs and resources, with an estimated 375 more apartments, 56,500 sq. ft., will be needed. However, there are imbalances in certain years within some groups and, although they are not shown on the Table, between family sizes and apartment sizes. Thus in 1971 there will be a deficit of 100 low-income apartments while in the following year there will be a surplus of 580 net. Thirty of the 257 households will be in moderate-income apartments, which are for a low-out of the Lower East Side, on some of the existing private moderate-income projects.

TABLE 15

Estimated Residential Relocation Needs and Resources, Stage 1 (1970-1972)A. Relocation Needs

Reason for Relocation	Total Household Relocation	Estimated Residential Relocation by Income							
		Income Group (a)		1970		1971		1972	
		Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate
Emergency moves (b)	600	540	60	180	20	180	20	180	20
P.S. 25	100	80	20	80	20				
P.S. 124	75	55	20	40	10	15	10		
P.S. 142	210	190	20			190	20		
Vest Pocket Housing	670	535	135	300	80	235	55		
Total	1655	1400	255	600	130	620	105	180	20

B. Relocation Resources

Public Housing Turnover (c)	1200	1200		400		400		400	
Housing Authority; Allen & Stanton Sts.	149	149		149					
Housing Authority; East 1 St.	231	231		231					
Howard Park Extension Renewal Sites 1A and 4A	360	360							
Southbridge Towers	90	90		90					
Total	2030	2030		870		400		760	
<u>C. Balance of Needs and Resources</u>									
Total	+375	+630	-255	+270	-130	-220	-105	+580	-20

(a) "Low Income" represents families eligible for public housing. According to surveys covering over half of the site tenants on the Stage 1 vest-pocket sites, 80 percent are eligible for public housing (i.e., low income). This income breakdown was accepted for all other causes of relocation except "emergency moves," where it was assumed that 90 percent of the families would be low income.

(b) Caused by fires, health hazards, abandonments, etc. Estimated at 200 per year by HDA.

(c) Estimated by the New York City Housing Authority.

have long waiting lists and new moderate-income housing will not be available until 1973.

Some of the most difficult relocation problems will be caused by the lack of correlation between the sizes (number of bedrooms) of the available apartments and the sizes of the households needing them. For example, of the 870 apartments that are expected to become available in 1970, over 500 will be efficiency or one-bedroom units; 309 of the 380 apartments in the two new public housing projects are designed for the elderly and 40 percent of the estimated public housing turnover vacancies will also be small units. About 350 of the apartments will be in the family

sizes (two or more bedrooms) while almost 400 of the displaced households will need units of this size. It is also likely that there will be a gap between supply and demand for the larger apartments of three or more bedrooms. Few of them become available through turnover, while a sizable number of the relocatees will need such apartments.

The tight rehousing situation in 1971 can be alleviated by shifting some of the displacement forward to 1972. This can be done, for example, by staging relocation from Sites 1 and 2 over two or three years and moving P.S. 142 displacement into the next year. Using such measures it should be possible to execute

Stage I of the vest-pocket program and the other scheduled improvements within a reasonable time span and also satisfy relocation demands.

To some extent the rehousing program described here abstracts the behavior of displaced families. Experience has shown that not all families who are eligible for public housing will want to move into it nor will all families want to remain in the Lower East Side. These unpredictable patterns will tend to lessen the local demand for relocation resources. On the other hand, a reasonable share of the anticipated public housing turnover and new construction will be used by families moving into the Lower East Side from other neighborhoods, thereby increasing the demand for local relocation housing. For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that three-quarters of the new apartments will be available for relocation from the Lower East Side.

Most of the 96 businesses and institutions to be relocated (e.g., storefront churches and social clubs) are small and will not encounter much difficulty in finding space in the vacant stores that abound on the Lower East Side. Some of the larger enterprises will also be able to locate space in the neighborhood, although it may need renovation. Others, such as the trucking companies, may be compelled to move to more appropriate locations outside of the residential community.

THE VEST POCKET HOUSING PROGRAM STAGE II

If the Stage I sites are developed according to the timetable and quantities described above, there will be 1,605 new apartments available within the next four years; about 1,130 early in 1973, and 475 (Sites 2 and 3) a year later. About four out of five apartments, an estimated 1,300, will be low-rent public housing, renting at about \$18 to \$20 per room per month, while the remaining apartments, all in the Cooper Square area, will be moderate-income at monthly rents of \$30 to \$35 a room. Any increases in zoning density will, of course, yield more than 1,605 apartments.

The first stage of the vest-pocket program will consume most of the desirable vacant and near-vacant housing sites in the Lower East Side. If, as it must, rebuilding continues, new sites must be produced on a regular basis. As Stage II and succeeding phases will involve extensive displacement from tenement blocks (recall the extremely high densities found in these districts) there must be adequate relocation housing available to keep the rebuilding cycle going. Housing built in Stage I

should be used partially as a relocation resource for Stage I and other community improvements, such as schools.

To a large extent, occupancy of Stage I housing should take the form of "controlled relocation" from Stage II sites and public projects. In order to capture as large a share as possible of Stage I housing for Stage II relocation, the two Stages will have to be closely coordinated and, indeed, treated as a continuous process. Ideally, site selection, designation and approval for Stage II should be completed early during construction of Stage I. Acquisition should begin during the second year of construction, with relocation commencing when the apartments are completed. In order to assure a continuous and controlled flow of displaced families and available sites, designation of Stage II should start late in 1971 and be near completion towards the end of 1972.

Whereas Stage I sites were carefully selected to minimize relocation, sites for Stage II can contain a larger number of families, a relocation housing for them will already be available. Therefore, since the range of possible sites in Stage II is wider, indeed, can be made in eliminating blocks of bad housing, a goal that was unattainable in Stage I.

The Map of Development Program proposals delineates general districts within which sites for Stage II of the vest-pocket housing program should be selected. Comparison of these districts with the Building Condition and Development Opportunities maps indicates that during Stage II measurable progress can be made in eliminating some of the worst housing in the Lower East Side. Particular circumstances at the time of site designation will govern the choice of specific parcels for new housing.

On the following table the impact of a generalized Stage II for the vest-pocket program is projected. If it is assumed that during Stage II at least 2,000 tenement apartments should be removed from the current housing inventory. Furthermore, it is assumed that three-quarters (1,500) of the 1,600 new apartments built during Stage I can be captured as relocation resources for the vest-pocket program.

In contrast to the Stage I relocation cycle, in which gross supply and demand were quite closely balanced, Stage II will yield an estimated surplus of 1,250 apartments, about one-third low and two-thirds moderate income units. Mainly as a result of the Seward Park Extension Urban Renewal Project, 1,720 moderate-income apartments will be completed between 1973 and 1975. But only 930 of them will be needed by displaced families (including the Stage I deficit of 255 moderate-income apartments), thereby creating a surplus of about 790 apartments. It can be assumed that the surplus will be taken by Lower East Side families presently living in tenements and public housing, and by families attracted to the community by the prospect of new housing.

An estimated surplus of 460 low-income apartments should be created mainly through Stage I of the vest-pocket program and turnover in public housing. This surplus can provide the margin for a variety of additional actions such as more land takings for open space and other neighborhood features during Stage II, accelerated code enforcement in selected blocks.

renewal and relocation needs for later stages and major community facilities, and hastening the replacement of the obsolete public schools that abound on the lower East Side.

Whether as this analysis may be, it does re-

veal that if a significant initial commitment to rebuilding is coordinated with subsequent renewal and relocation plans, the stage can be set for the continuous reconstruction of the lower East Side. It is the first step that will set the pattern for future efforts.

TABLE 19

Estimated Residential Relocation Needs and Resources, Stage II (1973-1975)

Relocation Needs	Population for Relocation	Total Household Relocation	Income Group (a)		Estimated Residential Relocation by Income				
			Low	Moderate	Low	1973		1974	
						Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low
Greenwich Square (1)	50		945	105	315	35	315	35	315
Wood Park Tenement Renewal	10		60	40			160	40	
Community Facilities	30		140	40			120	30	120
Lower East Side Renewal (Blocks 35 and 304)	245		195	50	145	35	50	15	30
Wood Park High School Annex	100		80	20	80	20			
Westchester High School	2100		1600	400	1320	330	280	70	
Total	389*		3220	675	1860	420	925	190	435
Relocation Resources									
Private from Relocation	375		630	-255	630	-255			
Public Housing Turnover (a)	1300		1300		400		450		450
Wood Park Tenement Renewal	1440		290	1150	7	690			120
Two Bridges Tenement Renewal	400		200	200			200	200	
Greenwich Street Tenement	150			150		150			
Westchester High School	1200		920	240	680	170	280	70	
Additional Marine House	300		300						
Total	545		3680	1465	1880	735	1220	270	570
Balance of Needs and Resources									
	+150		+460	+790	+20	+315	+295	+80	+135

* Income breakdown as used for Stage I.

(a) Used by firms, health hazards, abandonments, etc. Assumed to increase to 350 per year in 1973.

(b) New York City Housing Authority.

6. TRANSPORTATION AND STREETS

SUMMARY

Many of the Lower East Side's traffic and transportation problems stem from its geographical location; the area is surrounded by active commercial and civic districts, and serves as a corridor for through traffic. The busy FDR Drive on the east further complicates the traffic situation. The area's streets can be divided into three types: arterial, collector, and local streets.

The arterials, the largest streets, are -- north to south -- First Avenue, Second Avenue (and its extension, Chrystie Street), Third Avenue, the Bowery, and Fourth Avenue. The east-west arterials are 14th Street, Houston, Delancey, and Canal Streets. The latter two, carrying bridge traffic, are particularly congested. Because of the inefficiency of the arterials, through traffic often goes through and disrupts residential districts. Serious problems occur at the conjunction of arterials, such as the Bowery and Delancey Street, and at the approaches to the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges.

The collector streets carry traffic moving within the area; north to south are the FDR Drive service road and South Street, the lettered avenues, and Columbia, Pitt, Clinton and Essex Streets. Major east-west collectors are Grand Street, East Broadway, and Broome Street. Local streets, of which there are an unwarranted profusion on the Lower East Side, provide direct access to residences and businesses.

The Lower East Side lacks a clear and systematic arterial and collector system. Daily congestion is caused by the absence of turning lanes, poorly synchronized signals, frequent narrowing of streets, and too many intersections with local streets. Trucks, which travel ponderously and often stop for loading and unloading, and buses, with their frequent stops, impede the flow, as do cars double-parked for shopping. The stop-start traffic not only makes travel frustrating, but adds to the already high level of air pollution. Far too much land is devoted to unnecessary and redundant local streets; as a result, excessive traffic intrudes on residential blocks.

A thorough systematization of traffic circulation is recommended. The area's street layout can be seen as three grids: one from 14th Street to Houston Street; another between Houston and East Broadway, and a third from East Broadway to South Street. A major goal is to keep the important arterials connecting the grids -- First, Second, and Third Avenues and

their southerly extensions -- as clear and rapid roadways. Also, the four letter avenues and their extensions will be articulated and incorporated into the color for system. (Map 7 shows the proposed system.)

Additional improvements, including selective street widening, curbside bus stops, signal lanes, clear route signs and changes in flow and direction, will help clarify and ease traffic. The number of intersections can be reduced by closing certain local streets such as Forsyth, Allen and parts of Henry and Oliver, and using the land for community purposes. These measures will also reduce accidents.

It is certain that the deficit of parking spaces will grow worse. New public housing should provide one parking space for every four units. The use of valuable land for surface lots is wasteful. Instead, the space under the two bridge approaches should be exploited for parking, as well as underground and roof space in new housing.

Although dependent on Manhattan for 80 percent of its jobs, the Lower East Side does not enjoy good transit connection. Trunk subway lines run along the edge or cut through the corners of the community, leaving about half the population more than two long blocks from a subway station. By intent, the new Second Avenue subway will do little to remedy the situation, as it will parallel existing routes. Although the new subway loop running along 14th Street, down Avenue C and west on Houston Street will provide important connections to other lines and serve a dense residential area, a large section of the Lower East Side is still left without good subway service. Scheduling, terminal and running conditions may well also keep the loop from performing at an optimum level.

Bus service may present a more desirable solution to local transit problems. Changes in old routes, new routes and free transfers could provide the transportation flexibility and lower fares needed by residents. In any event, considering the shifts in work places out of Manhattan, job holders will also need good transportation to other boroughs and suburbs if they are to remain competitive members of the labor force.

Walking is still the favored way of travel on the Lower East Side. Rebuilding should seek to link traffic-free streets, places of assembly, parks and housing complexes into routes along which walking can be pleasurable and stimulating.

VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

The position of the Lower East Side within the city and the region is highlighted on Map 1. In the metropolitan context, it is situated in a corridor joining the dense commercial and industrial parts of New York with the eastern sections of New York and Long Island. Viewed on a smaller scale, the Lower East Side is surrounded by important commercial and residential districts in Manhattan. As a result of its location, most of the vehicles on the streets are simply travelling through the community to the areas beyond. To a large extent, then, the community's transportation problems can only be resolved if traffic passing through it is reduced and controlled. Desirable as it may be to restrict vehicular traffic in Manhattan, the Lower East Side, by virtue of its location, will continue to carry a reasonable share of through traffic. Also, as the Lower East Side will be rebuilt gradually, only limited changes can be made in a feature as pervasive as the street network. Therefore, many of the existing streets, especially major roads, can be expected to remain important thoroughfares.

EXISTING STREET SYSTEM

The Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive is the most heavily travelled roadway in the Lower East Side. Part of the highway system encircling Manhattan, it follows the East River shoreline at grade along the East River Park and rises to a viaduct at South Street. Connections between the Drive and the Lower East Side are limited; only at Houston Street can uptown traffic enter and leave. Because the Drive is at grade for much of its length, downtown entrances and exits from the service road are frequent.

Other streets on the Lower East Side generally fall into one of three categories--arterial, collector, and local streets--with the nature and extent of use varying with each type.

Arterial Streets

The main purpose of the arterials is to provide the larger capacities needed by traffic moving through and to a limited degree between subdivisions of the community. However, because of the insufficiency of the arterials, through traffic often seeks other routes that take it into residential districts. Because of geography and the land development pattern along the north-south arterials are concentrated along the western edge of the community, namely, First Avenue (uptown), Second Avenue (downtown), and its extension into Chrystie Street (two-way), and the trio of Third (two-way) and Fourth Avenues and the Bowery. Traffic volumes on these arterials generally range between 18,000 and 38,000 vehicles per day with peak demand between 10 a.m. and noon and in the afternoon rush hour. The Bowery, which carries the heaviest and most continuous traffic, is the only direct two-way connection between the downtown civil and business center and east midtown. In addition it brings traffic to and from the three East River bridges. The other two routes also serve the Manhattan and Williamsburg Bridges, the East River Drive via Houston Street, and handle traffic moving within the Lower East

The dominant east-west arterials, 14th Street, Houston Street, Delancey Street and Canal Street, are more equally spaced than the north-south routes and tend to divide the community into major sub-sections. Volumes on these streets range from between 18,000 and 58,000 vehicles per day with peak travel occurring during the regular morning and afternoon rush hours. The importance of the bridges is borne out by the fact that two of the streets directly serving them--Delancey and Canal--handle the highest lateral volumes in the system: 29,000 and 58,000 vehicles respectively. Only the Bowery, which also serves the bridges but in a north-south direction, is in the same class with 38,000 vehicles a day.

Although all the arterials carry large amounts of truck traffic, it is especially intense on Delancey and Canal Streets. These streets are prime routes for trucks moving between Long Island, Manhattan and New Jersey via the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges and the Holland Tunnel. As the only direct north-south route on the eastern side of Manhattan, the Bowery also carries a large volume of truck traffic travelling within the borough and using the bridges. Major traffic disruptions along the arterials occur at points where heavy east-west traffic meets heavy north-south traffic, such as the intersection of the Bowery and Delancey Street, also, at the approach to the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges traffic coagulates on the surface streets as it leaves or enters the bridges.

Collector Streets

Collectors are the main carriers for traffic moving within the Lower East Side. Major north-south collectors are the F.D.R. Drive service road and its extension, South Street, the lettered avenues, all of which terminate at 14th Street, and their extensions south of Houston Street: Columbia, Pitt, Clinton, and Essex Streets. Traffic volumes on these streets range between 4,000 and 8,000 vehicles daily with peaks coinciding with the daily rush hours. These streets carry a mixture of autos, trucks, and buses. With the exception of Clinton Street which is frequently at a standstill, traffic moves at a reasonable rate.

Important east-west collectors include Grand Street and East Broadway, and the part of Broome Street west of Chrystie Street. Grand Street and East Broadway carry between 6,000 and 10,000 vehicles daily, with the highest volumes encountered on the western sections. Peak volumes appear to be clustered around midday, possibly reflecting the importance of these streets for shopping. In contrast to the rush hour concentrations on the other collectors. As the east-west collector system is not as extensive as the north-south network, a good deal of the east-west traffic ends up using local streets and going through residential blocks.

Local Streets

Local streets are the highly proliferated network that provides direct access to the residential areas, especially the tenement blocks, and the business sections. Daily volumes on these narrow streets range from several hundred to about 2,000 vehicles. Volumes tend to increase in the vicinity of housing developments where the regular grid pattern has been compressed, thereby forming a disproportionate

share of traffic onto the remaining streets. Local streets carry a mixture of automobile and light truck traffic, some of it there to avoid bottlenecks on the collectors.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

Within the context of the existing street network the most prominent circulation problems are (1) lack of clear and systematic arterial and collector street systems; (2) an excessively proliferated local street system resulting in the intrusion of traffic into residential areas and the devotion of a valuable land resource to unnecessary streets; (3) serious traffic disruptions at specific points in the system; (4) an inefficient parking supply in terms of the number of spaces, their distribution and use, and the enforcement of regulations; and (5) inadequate loading and unloading facilities for businesses.

Lack of a Systematic Street Pattern

With the abandonment of the plans for the Lower Manhattan Expressway and the uncertainty about an alternate route, large amounts of through traffic will continue to use the Lower East Side's surface streets. In addition to the problems caused by the sheer volume of traffic, the matter of congestion at the intersections of the arterial system (and to a degree at the collector level) and at the bridge approaches will also have to be resolved. This resolution, which may only be an interim one, will have to rely upon the existing network. If, in the future, traffic volumes can be considerably reduced or redirected it would be possible to significantly change the main street network.

Ideally, collector streets should provide the clearest and most rapid routes for traffic going through the Lower East Side. Instead, such arterial streets as the Bowery, Second Avenue and Houston Street carry a mixture of through and local traffic, faster moving automobiles and slower moving, ponderous trucks and buses. Most of the arterials are intersected frequently by local streets, creating a steady cross-traffic that interrupts what should otherwise be a reasonably even flow. Some of the arterials are too narrow to carry the loads imposed on them while others have their effective capacity reduced by curb parking, double parking, and delivery vehicles. The absence of turning lanes and signals at important intersections inhibits essential turns and blocks traffic on feeder streets. Arterial traffic with its heavy volumes, staccato movement and large share of truck and bus traffic also contributes significantly to the miasma of air pollution on the Lower East Side.

Proliferation of Local Streets

From the point of view of systematic traffic flow, one of the Lower East Side's main problems is the proliferated local street system. The excessive amount of land devoted to streets is also a precious resource devoted to streets. A profusion of local streets, especially in the blocks between Houston Street and East Broadway, means that residential districts that should be tranquil and attractive are subject to the intrusions of the automobile. Only in the somewhat calm backwater below East Broadway has the traffic infiltration not yet reached an unpleasant level. In terms of renewal the redundant street pattern prevents land from being assembled in parcels of the size suitable for modern land planning and construction methods.

Local Disruptions in Traffic

Both the arterial and collector systems are disrupted at specific points, the most serious at arterial intersections. The crossings of the Bowery at Houston, Delancey, Broome, and Canal Streets, the intersections at First Avenue and Houston Street, the constriction of Kenmare Street west of the Bowery, are all points where severe disturbances in traffic flow and accidents frequently occur. (See Table 21 below.)

At many of these intersections traffic becomes snarled because of the absence of separate lanes and signals for left-turning vehicles. The situation is often compounded by poorly synchronized signals along arterials, thereby fragmenting the flow of traffic.

At places such as the intersection of Second Avenue and Houston Street, and Broome Street between the Bowery and Chrystie Street, trafficways are too irregular or narrow to carry the demands being imposed on them. Other points of local conflict are shopping streets such as Clinton, where moving and parked cars, buses, and delivery vehicles all compete for space along the narrow route. Conditions on these blocks and around Houston and Delancey, and near the Cooper Square-St. Marks district are intensified on week ends when shopping is heavier.

Insufficient Parking

Despite the fervent desires of planners, it does not appear likely that public transit will fully replace private automobiles, even in Manhattan. With growing personal income and mobility, residents of an area such as the Lower East Side are likely to seek even greater use of the automobile for work and leisure. Nor is the present mass transportation system attractive enough to deter prospective car owners. Hence, plans for the Lower East Side must start providing, at least for the immediate future, adequate parking space. The current inventory of parking spaces on the Lower East Side is estimated as follows:

TABLE 20

Available Parking Spaces, 1969

<u>On Street</u>	
Metered	1,500
Unmetered (a)	4,500
<u>Off Street</u>	
Commercial (b)	1,300
Accessory (c)	2,300
<u>Total</u>	<u>9,600</u>

- (a) Excludes curb spaces along which parking has been partially or completely prohibited.
- (b) Excludes parking on lots destined for immediate use as building sites.
- (c) Residential parking allied with housing projects or parking reserved for specific businesses.

Source. Consultant's estimates.

Less than 6,000 of these spaces are available on a regular basis to residents as against the estimated 10,000 households (1964 Tri-State Transportation Committee Survey) living on the Lower East Side who owned automobiles. Added to this resident demand is the demand for several thousand spaces by employees and customers of local businesses and institutions.

TABLE 21

Accidents at Selected Intersections, 1968

<u>Intersection</u>	<u>Total Accidents</u>	<u>Pedestrian Accidents</u>	<u>Fatalities</u>	<u>Persons Injured</u>
Bowery & East Houston	86	46		69
Bowery & Canal	86	21	1	21
Chrystie & Delancey	57	18	1	39
FDR Drive & E. Houston	56	27	4	40
Manhattan Plaza	53	12		20
Williamsburg Bridge	63	40		63
Clinton & Delancey	47	15	1	19
Delancey & Essex	41	27	3	30
Delancey & Suffolk	33	14	1	18
Delancey & Nortolk	30	15		18
Delancey & FDR Drive	27	14		21
Bowery & Delancey	27	12	1	18
Clinton & Williamsburg Bridge	26	12		25
Bowery & Grand	24	12	1	14

Source: N.Y.C. Police Department

The demand for accessory residential parking substantially exceeds the supply, compelling an excessive reliance on curb spaces. And this demand will grow as curb spaces are lost through street closings, and planned housing replaces tenements. It is questionable whether meeting this demand by surface parking, as has been done in the past, is the most appropriate use of costly land.

With an apparent deficit of several thousand parking spaces the situation on the Lower East Side is saved from total breakdown only by a series of daily improvisations and adaptations. To a large degree parking regulations are often ignored and violations benevolently overlooked. Alternate side restrictions are unevenly enforced, preventing the street cleaning they were designed to facilitate. In other areas parking is unnecessarily restricted on lightly travelled local streets that might otherwise be used by residents and shoppers. Conversely, metered parking is often permitted on such streets, for example, Clinton, where it should be prohibited to expedite traffic flow.

Metered parking is generally found along the arterial and collector streets. Yet many metered spaces are occupied all day by merchants and employees, thereby negating the main purpose of curb metering, which is to encourage a turnover

in spaces. Other sections of curb space where parking is now prohibited, most of the time in vain, could be metered to stimulate turnover.

Commercial parking is totally haphazard, ranging from small lots on residential blocks rented on a monthly basis, to a few larger lots that will eventually be absorbed into building sites or to older garages on the fringes of commercial areas. The absence of a reasonable supply of off-street parking located near commercial areas and priced to encourage use by shoppers not only contributes to the decline of the Lower East Side as a retail center but also increases street congestion, itself a deterrent to shoppers.

Goods Movement for Business

As long as the Lower East Side's business structure is characterized by many small establishments, each with its own schedule and procedures for moving merchandise, a large number of trucks will be on the streets. The entry of trucks adversely affects the operation of the circulation system in two ways: first, because of slower speed and lack of maneuverability they impede the steady flow of traffic. Second, their loading and unloading operations block traffic lanes and cause tie-ups, especially on narrow collector and local streets.



VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

7

LOWER EAST SIDE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

CITY OF NEW YORK

HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

CONSULTANTS

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
ABELES SCHWARTZ AND ASSOCIATES



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MAY 1970

Lower East Side businesses are typically quartered in old buildings that do not provide any off-street truck bays or parking. Goods are commonly handled at curbside, often by double parking, and moved across the sidewalks. Interfering with pedestrians and other businesses. This situation reaches its zenith with the restaurant equipment suppliers along the Bowery who often use the sidewalk for temporary storage and as an outdoor workshop for repairing appliances.

IMPROVING VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

As the use of the anatomical terms "circulation system" and "arteries" implies, streets can be viewed as the network linking parts of the communal organism. As in any organism, changes in the circulatory system will affect vital functions, while modifications in the structure will affect circulation. In the case of the Lower East Side, as in any organism, circulation and basic functions are intertwined; one cannot be materially changed without influencing the other. Thus, if vehicular pollution levels are lowered by reducing or rerouting traffic there should be a beneficial effect on health and life on the Lower East Side. Within such a fabric of interdependencies this section emphasizes the physical changes that will improve necessary vehicular circulation while also lessening its damaging impact. Many of the changes are of the scale and character that can be implemented within the six-year span of the Development Plan. Other chapters such as those on Environmental Protection and Aspects of Rebuilding also offer ideas for rearranging traffic patterns.

Systematizing Traffic Circulation

Historical persistence and the location of the Lower East Side will maintain the status of the present arterial and many of the collector streets. Although they will remain important roadways, significant changes should be made in the volumes of traffic they handle, the quality of the movement, and their relation to other parts of the system. The Lower East Side's street layout can be seen as three adjoining grid systems: one going from 14th Street to Houston Street, a middle one between Houston Street and East Broadway, and a southerly section from East Broadway to South Street. To a large extent these street systems also define the political and social sub-communities of the Lower East Side. Only three of the streets connecting the three grids--First, Second, and Third Avenues, and their continuations below Houston Street--are important arterials. One of the main goals, therefore, of a circulation plan is to enhance their importance by keeping them as clear, rapid connections between the sub-sections of the Lower East Side. In addition, as shown on Map 7, Circulation, the four letter avenues and their extensions below Houston Street will be articulated and incorporated into the collector street system.

Short of limiting the amount of traffic in Manhattan by regulation or user charges, numerous proposals involving new roadways have been advanced over the years for relieving the volumes of traffic funneling through the Lower East Side. The latest of these, the Lower Manhattan Expressway, would have introduced a depressed highway across Manhattan connecting the Holland Tunnel and the West Side Highway with the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges. In 1969, after many years of active community opposition and uncertainty about the costs and benefits of the highway, the plan was discarded. Another roadway solution now receiving serious

consideration, is the so-called "horn route" This would divert traffic around the lower end of Manhattan along the path of the existing peripheral highways. A rebuild and widened South Street Viaduct and West Side Highway, capable of handling trucks, would connect the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges with the Holland Tunnel. However, as the Williamsburg Bridge could not easily be linked to the highway, through traffic would still come into the neighborhood across Delancey Street.

Assuming that the volume of through traffic on arterial and collector streets can be reduced by the horn route or an alternative, or user restrictions, a second series of improvements will seek to direct and clarify the remaining flow of necessary traffic. The most effective way to clarify traffic is by measures that will strongly encourage the use of certain routes and discourage traffic on other streets.

As Map 7 shows, the proposed arterial system adheres to the present pattern and in fact adds to it Allen Street below Houston Street. Also, with the closing of Forsyth Street and the use of the Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway for building, Chrystie Street will be widened and made south-bound. At its southern terminus it will lead to an improved surface connection to the Manhattan Bridge via Division Street and the Bowery. Other existing collector streets, such as Grand and East Broadway, will be retained. Above Houston Street, traffic will be concentrated on five of the thirteen cross-town streets, with two of them--East 4th and East 10th--designated as rapid two-way routes across the island. Plans for these streets typify the desired balance of actions: through travel will be expedited by banning curb parking and standing, and providing curb cuts for buses. Most of the remaining cross-town streets will be closed to all but emergency traffic by converting them into building sites, play streets or street parks. Specific measures that will help improve and systematize vehicular traffic are described below. Action on most of them can be started within the Development Plan period.

1. Enforcing parking regulations.

Parking regulations that will facilitate traffic movement on designated streets should be established and enforced. This includes prohibiting curb parking on such streets as Clinton above Delancey, banning double parking and limiting loading and unloading at businesses during rush hours.

2. Selective street widening

In order to concentrate and ease traffic movement, some streets should be widened. Chief among these are Kenmare, Clinton, and Broome Streets. Kenmare Street, a major route between the Williamsburg Bridge and the west side narrows from four to two usable lanes west of the Bowery. Because of this constriction and illegal parking, traffic is often backed up as far as Essex Street and sometimes to the Bridge. Sidewalks along Kenmare Street are sufficiently wide to yield one additional lane and another one can be gained by enforcing parking restrictions. Clinton Street, an important community shopping street, carries a mixture of trucks, buses, and cars. Metered parking on both sides limits traffic to one lane. Ultimately the street should be widened by at least two lanes. Until then, parking should be banned on one side to permit two moving lanes.

3. Facilitating bus traffic.

As Map 9, Surface Transit System, shows, all the arterials and many of the collectors have bus traffic. When buses stop in a moving

lane or driveway, the no. 1 street, for traffic on an considerably impeded. This is particularly true on narrow streets, where buses may block all traffic. Turnouts should be provided for buses and the driver compelled to use them instead of stopping for passengers in a traffic lane.

4. Proper signalization and traffic lanes.
At key intersections left-turn signals and turning lanes would facilitate turning movements and help prevent left turns, especially multiple ones, from blocking all traffic. They are especially needed at the Delancey Street Intersections with the Bowery, Grand, Essex, Allen, and Chrystie Streets. Marked turning lanes would help sort out traffic. Also, synchronized and progressive traffic lights should be installed on the avenues where appropriate.

5. Proper route signs.
Route signs indicating directions and destinations (e.g., uptown, downtown) should be installed on an aid to motorists along arterial streets and especially the bridge portals. These should help drivers, particularly those unfamiliar with the roads, to find the most expeditious route through the neighborhood.

6. Changes in traffic flow and direction.
On some streets, such as Chrystie Street, introducing a one-way flow will help move traffic to specific destinations--in this case an improved approach to the Manhattan Bridge. This measure can divert traffic from nearby overcrowded routes and make them more efficient carriers.

7. Reducing the number of intersections.
One of the principal impediments to arterial and collector traffic flow is the excessive number of local street intersections. As shown on Map 7, many of the intervening local streets will eventually be closed, reducing the number of interruptions in the traffic flow and lessening the delaying effect of cross-traffic. The other aim of the systematization program is to actively discourage use of local streets for types of traffic that ought to be using the arterial or collector routes.

8. Street closing.
This effective device can range from simply closing a street to through traffic at various hours and using it for a play street, to abolishing the street altogether and using it permanently in another fashion. In practice, a street might go through several stages, starting with temporary closing, before it would be re-used. In any event, the message of the closing should be obvious to the motorist: the street is to be avoided for anything but access to buildings on that block. The next sub-section specifies uses to which closed streets could be put.

9. Relocating activities.
As a result of custom and a general lack of concern for the livability of a poor neighborhood, many rather intrusive activities (latter-day zoning experts would call them "nonconforming uses") are located in the midst of the Lower East Side's residential blocks. These activities, such as food processors and trucking terminals, attract a large amount of noxious traffic. Relocating the offending activities through redevelopment would remove traffic that does not belong on streets where people live.

Recapturing Redundant Streets

The benefits that can be gained by the relatively simple expedient of closing streets on the Lower East Side is a good illustration of the

At least three distinct benefits can result from street closings: clarification of the community's circulation system, the release of land for more productive uses, and a lessening of the unhealthy and disruptive intrusions of traffic into residential areas. This sub-section will be concerned mainly with benefits to the circulation system, re-use of the street land and the enhancement of neighborhood life are dealt with in other chapters.

Map 7 shows that the grid will remain the basic circulation pattern on the Lower East Side. Two of the three grids above Houston Street and below East Broadway are composed of rather large units--either large city blocks or super-block housing projects. Most of the streets in these grids have a clear purpose and continue past the borders of the neighborhood. In contrast, in the middle grid, between Delancey and East Broadway, west of Pitt Street, the basic block is small, running 150' x 400' (and less in many cases), and most of the streets terminate within or at the boundaries of the neighborhood. As the out-moded development pattern is changed, many of the streets can be eliminated and put to a more productive use.

In this middle area most of the local streets are dispensable and can be closed without any serious loss. The collector streets can also be closed as trafficways: Forsyth Street, which will be combined with Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway and used for building sites, and the eastern roadway of Allen Street. In the latter case the rather useless median masquerading as a park can be absorbed as building sites together with the eastern roadway of Allen Street and the narrow block between Allen and Orchard Sts.

While many of the streets can be recaptured, those that remain--such as Clinton, Essex, and Grand Street--will have to be improved and clarified if they are to handle the demands that will be imposed on them. These improvements, such as street widening and enforcement of parking regulations, will enable a selective network of arterials and collectors to move traffic that now indiscriminately filters along most neighborhood streets. As local access in this rebuilt section will be in an east-west direction, the present east-west collectors, such as Stanton and Rivington Streets, will be retained, and, in fact, will have to be widened slightly to absorb the additional local traffic.

In contrast to the proliferation of local north-south streets below Houston, it is the east-west streets that are excessive above Houston. Reflecting the strong traffic currents on the Lower East Side, all the north-south avenues in this section will be retained. Six of the cross-town streets can be closed, creating new "building blocks" equivalent, for the most part, to two of the existing blocks. The actual right-of-way might well remain, but it would be closed to all but emergency traffic, and new buildings could be related to it in a way that would de-emphasize its purpose as a corridor. Illustration 1 shows an intermediate step in the creation of these "building blocks." Some streets in this area, such as 5th Street, have already been closed in places, future closings can continue the pattern already established.

The area below East Broadway is outside the main stream of traffic flow because of its location and its skewed street grid. Several super-blocks have already been created through redevelopment and the opportunity for adding new ones is limited. Outside of the Two Bridges Urban Renewal Plan, which will absorb several street

segments, only sections of Monroe and Water Streets should be closed. A section of Henry Street and all of Oliver Street could be converted into a pleasant street for walkers.

Local Improvements to the Traffic System

In addition to the more inclusive changes that will redress the balance between livability and mobility in the Lower East Side, there are numerous smaller scale improvements, which if taken together, could make the vehicular circulation system work better. These are discussed briefly below and keyed into illustration

1. Widening Broome Street.

A considerable amount of traffic, much of it trucks, travels south on Chrystie Street and turns right on Broome Street heading west to the Holland Tunnel and the West Side Highway. Broome Street between Chrystie Street and the Bowery is narrower and off-set from Broome Street west of the Bowery. At least as an immediate relief, Broome Street should be widened between Chrystie Street and the Bowery. This will permit two lanes of moving traffic to feed directly without joggling over into Broome Street west of the Bowery. Parking along Broome Street may also have to be restricted to permit a steady two lanes of traffic. When the Bowery is rebuilt a more durable solution might be found for the flow of traffic across the Broome Street intersection.

2. Access to the Manhattan Bridge.

Vehicles coming off the Manhattan Bridge now have a choice of three surface routes: Canal and Chrystie Streets and the Bowery, so that inbound traffic is not often congested. On the other hand outbound traffic coming across Canal Street or along the Bowery can often become severely congested. The ramp joining the Bridge and the South Street Viaduct, as part of the horn route alternate to the Lower Manhattan Expressway, will divert a considerable amount of traffic that would otherwise use surface streets going to and from the Bridge. Therefore, uptown traffic on Chrystie Street, most of it from the Bridge, could be removed and the street made a one-way southbound feeder into the Bridge. Alterations in the abutments at the foot of Chrystie and Forsyth Streets and the provision of two moving lanes along Division Street should permit the Chrystie-Division-Bowery route to work as an effective loop feeder into the Manhattan Bridge.

3. Houston Street.

At peak hours, week ends and on holidays, traffic frequently becomes snarled along Houston Street. This congestion is most intense where Houston crosses the Bowery, Second Avenue, First Avenue, and Avenue A. At each of these intersections the sheer volume of moving traffic combined with left turns can easily back up traffic on the north-south streets and immobilize Houston Street.

At the worst intersection, Houston and Second Avenue-Chrystie Street, the traffic cannot flow freely because Second Avenue and Chrystie Street are somewhat offset to each other. This can be corrected and the streets aligned by taking a small sliver of land from the block west of Chrystie when it is developed during the vest-pocket program. Traffic can be expedited at the other troublesome intersections along Houston Street by synchronizing traffic lights, installing left-turn signals, and establishing left-turn lanes.

Reducing Traffic Accidents

Not surprisingly, as shown on the earlier Table, accidents occur most frequently at the major intersections where traffic volumes are heavy, many of the vehicles are turning, and signalling is often inadequate. These dangerous intersections are concentrated along the Bowery and Delancey, two of the most heavily travelled arteries on the Lower East Side. Measures discussed earlier--the installation of left-turn signals and lenses, the prohibition of double parking, and the use of pull-outs at bus stops--should all contribute to increased safety for both drivers and pedestrians.

At particular intersections even minor changes can be used to reduce the likelihood of accidents. For example, at Chrystie and Delancey Streets, a longer delay between red and green signals would allow the intersection to clear, thereby lessening the congestion from vehicular movements and pedestrian crossings. Similarly, at Delancey and Clinton Streets, installing warning signs, making the traffic lights more visible for traffic coming off the bridge, and resetting the pedestrian signals on Clinton Street, could help make this hazardous intersection safer.

Although it is not reflected in the list of selected hazardous crossings, many accidents causing personal injuries occur along the local residential streets and at their intersections with other routes. Reducing the number of local streets and lessening their use for through travel should result in fewer accidents to pedestrians and property in residential districts.

Adequate Parking Facilities

As noted above, the Lower East Side has an immediate shortage of several thousand parking spaces for residents and transients. These needs may not be readily apparent as most motorists are skillful and manage to find a space, either legal or illegal. However, these improvisations often compromise circulation and livability--double parking along heavily travelled streets, infringements on alternate side parking (with consequent interruptions in street cleaning), the use of bus stops as parking spaces. It is only because regulations are less than zealously enforced that the parking situation has not reached a critical stage.

While the situation for transient parking will improve somewhat in the coming years as a result of the construction of municipal parking garages, the deficit of spaces for residents is expected to rise. Several factors will contribute to the worsening situation: the loss of curb spaces because of street closings, the use of parking lots for housing sites, and a higher incidence of automobile ownership, combined with slight gains in the Lower East Side's population. Unless the demand for residential parking is diminished by imposing general restrictions on automobile ownership and use, the outlook for providing the needed supply of spaces is quite bleak. Although random vacant lots and "dead" spaces, such as under the bridges, plus a dwindling number of curb spaces, will continue to be used for parking, eventually there will have to be a systematic solution to the parking needs of residents.

Considering the reliance on auto travel, the prevailing allocation of parking spaces to dwelling units in large housing developments is unrealistic. The city's Zoning Resolution specifies that accessory off-street parking in the R7-2 zone that covers most of the Lower East

Side should be provided for fifteen percent of the apartments in new public or similar low-income housing, and for half the apartments in moderate-income housing. As most of the development housing in the community pre-dates these requirements, the actual ratios for such housing is much lower, running about one space to ten apartments in public housing and one to five in moderate-income housing.

Over the long run both ratios should change to satisfy local conditions and the realities of auto use. A reasonable overall goal would be one space to between four and five units in public housing and one space to about three units in moderate-cost housing. Therefore, the current ratio should be increased for new public housing and decreased for apartments in new moderate-income units. In order to meet the deficit in spaces for existing housing and compensate for the loss of street spaces, additional accessory parking should be provided in central structures, such as under the bridge approaches and in large renewal projects.

Meeting these parking needs on surface lots is both a costly and a wasteful use of land. Most large new parking reserves should be in structures that are developed concurrent with the rebuilding of residential blocks. As illustrated in the discussion of the reconstruction plan for the nine-block area in Chapter 3, the form of these garages could be a one-story structure, the top of which would be devoted to play and open space for the housing residents. The costs of the parking should be incorporated into the capital costs of the housing and repaid to the extent possible by renting the spaces to tenants.

Several of the Lower East Side commercial centers, such as the Orchard Street market or the J. Marks Place-Cooper Square areas, are dependent on a clientele that lives outside the community. If these centers are to flourish they need a modicum of convenient parking for visitors. As of now there are not enough parking spaces available to commercial establishments. The larger parking lots are on the edge of the commercial districts, the few private garages are not geared to short-term parking, and metered spaces are too often haphazardly allocated and inadequately policed. A commercial parking policy for the Lower East Side should include a reasonable number of new off-street spaces and a rational use of metered curb spaces. Garage spaces should be priced to encourage short-term shopper parking rather than all-day worker use. Additional curb spaces could be gained in the Delancey and Grand Streets shopping areas by metering streets along which parking is now arbitrarily restricted or totally banned. Naturally, any reliance on metered parking presupposes adequate and efficient enforcement to encourage a steady turnover.

Presently there are no municipal parking garages on the Lower East Side. Plans call for the construction of at least two municipal parking garages: one between Essex and Ludlow Streets above Delancey Street for 390 cars, and the other near Grand and Allen Streets, with a slightly larger capacity. The Essex Street garage is in the design stage and construction should begin this year; the site for the Grand Street structure has not yet been approved.

The Essex Street garage is located within an important shopping area that lacks substantial off-street parking. It will alleviate some of the "normal" congestion but its effect on weekend traffic and illegal parking will be limited. In fact, weekend traffic congestion could be in-

tensified by autos entering and leaving the garage. A Grand-Allen Street location does not seem as appropriate for the second garage, which, although serving a less active commercial area than the first, is planned for a larger capacity. If the garage were moved westward to Forsyth or Chrystie Streets it could serve not only Grand Street but also the commercial districts along the Bowery and Canal Street. If renewal of the Bowery starts soon the garage could be incorporated into the first new industrial space between Canal and Grand Streets, where it would be central to numerous industrial and commercial establishments.

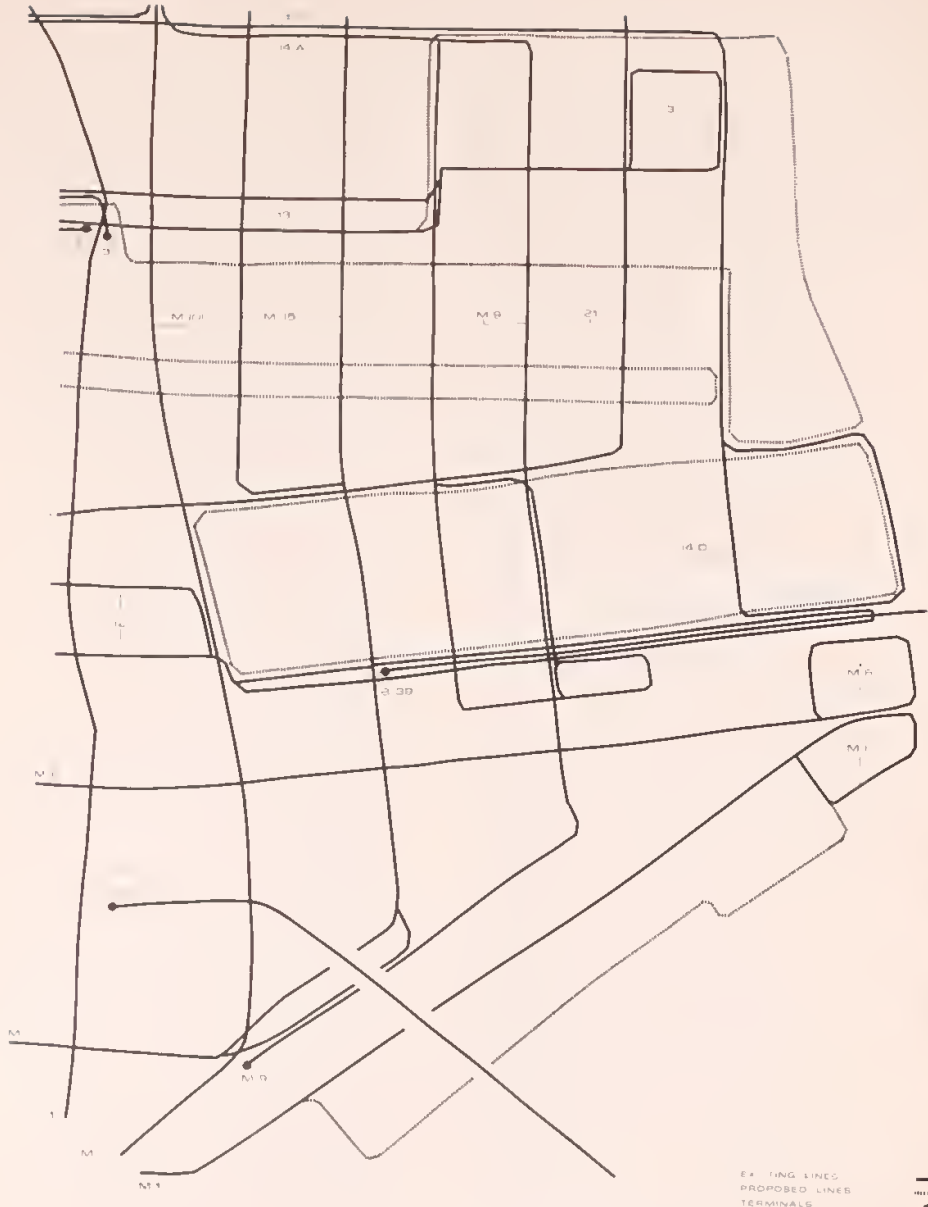
There is one resource that could provide additional off-street parking for both residents and transients--the space under the Manhattan and Williamsburg Bridges. (Part of the space under the Brooklyn Bridge is already intelligently used by automobiles: abandoned cars destined for the scrap yard. Noise and air pollution emanating from car, truck, and train traffic make service stations, parking, and storage probably the most logical uses for this space. Now all the parking is at ground level. But considering the available height under the bridges as they ramp up towards the river, multi-story parking garages could be built under the Williamsburg and Manhattan spans. The area under the bridges is 110 feet wide, enough for four lanes of angle parking. Allowing ten feet per parking floor and ten feet clearance under the bridge, garages as high as five stories could be built. It is estimated that 800 cars could be accommodated under the Williamsburg Bridge and almost 400 under the Manhattan Bridge. These attended garages could be used by shoppers and workers during the day and by residents at night.

Parking regulations on the Lower East Side are in need of a thorough reassessment, with the goals of minimizing parking on arterial routes, at least during the hours of peak use, while relegating parking to streets which are not heavily travelled. In commercial areas these streets should be metered, and in residential areas alternate side regulations should prevail.

Of course, any reassessment of regulations will be ineffective without a program of strict enforcement, which might include establishing tow-away zones on the heavily travelled traffic arteries.

Enforcement of parking regulations is particularly important in the Delancey-Houston Street shopping district where shoppers frequently double and triple park on weekends, reducing traffic to a single lane and backing it up in both directions on Houston Street and often on the side streets as well. At these times it can take between 30 and 45 minutes to travel between Broadway and the FDR Drive. The parking garage at Essex and Delancey Streets and the new spaces under the bridges will relieve some of this pressure.

"No standing" regulations should also be enforced. A standing vehicle is just as much of an impediment to the free flow of traffic as a parked one. Bus stops should, where possible, be cut into the sidewalk to avoid blocking traffic while taking on and discharging passengers. This is particularly necessary where routes terminate, as several vehicles often remain standing for a period of time before starting out on the route again.



RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM

8

LOWER EAST SIDE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
PLANNING ENGINEERING
ARELL SCHWARTZ AND ASSOCIATES



MAY 1970



EXISTING LINES
PROPOSED LINES
STATIONS



SURFACE TRANSIT SYSTEM

9

LOWER EAST SIDE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
PLANNING
CONSULTANTS
ABRAHAM SCHWARTZ AND ASSOCIATES



MASS TRANSIT

TRAVEL PATTERNS

Available information on travel patterns only describes the transportation planners favored datum: the journey to work. Although mass transit is heavily used for shopping, education and recreation, these pursuits are not evident in the reporting of transit usage on the Lower East Side. Figures from the 1960 Census highlight the reliance upon mass transit: 37 percent of the workers used the subway to go to work, 27 percent relied mainly upon the bus and only 6 percent used private cars. An additional 16 percent walked to work, reflecting the importance of the lower Manhattan industrial and business districts. Current figures would probably find fewer walkers as there are fewer jobs within walking distance and greater use of the subway for the industrial jobs that tend to be moving out of Manhattan.

In regard to destinations, the TriState Transportation Committee's Home Interview Survey showed that 79 percent of the work destinations were in Manhattan, 10 percent in Brooklyn, 4 percent in Queens, 3 percent in the Bronx and less than 5 percent outside of New York City. Among the lowest income households, 84 percent of all work destinations were in Manhattan and less than 2 percent outside of the city. Only among households earning between \$4,000 and \$6,000 a year was the attraction of Manhattan lessened, with 74 percent of the job destinations still in that borough. Among this group, Brooklyn still was the second most popular locale, with 12 percent of the destinations. Within Manhattan the lower West Side, specifically the garment area and the loft district along the western edge of the island, is the site of the largest share of the jobs, with 32 percent of the destinations. About a quarter were in midtown, 7 percent on the upper east and west sides, and 14 percent on the Lower East Side, including the loft district west of the Bowery. Less than 5 percent of the jobs are in the nearby downtown financial and business sections.

SUBWAY

Six out of seven Lower East Side households do not have an automobile. Hence, they are dependent on mass transit for going to and from work and much of their travel for shopping, recreation and visiting.

As noted earlier, because of the anomaly of geography and the history of Manhattan development, the Lower East Side is not astride the major north-south transit trunk lines. Although as shown on Map B several transit lines lie close to or penetrate the community, the most important of these lines (6, B, and D) serve mostly the western fringes of the community or the nearby industrial areas, while the lines that cut through the area are feeder routes and/or do not serve the places to which many residents wish to travel. Bus service tends to reinforce the rigidities of the subways, either serving as feeders or providing parallel north-south service on the main streets. Travel to nearby sections of Manhattan, such as

the Lower East Side and the Bronx, involves the labor force works, involves the fares in each direction and a time-consuming transfer. A recent report summed up the situation:

The Lower East Side, while within Manhattan and served by several bus lines penetrating the Manhattan central business district has a large area which is more than walking distance from a subway station. Therefore to reach the west side of Manhattan conveniently or any other borough from the Lower East Side, two fares are required. The Lower East Side may have poorer transit service than the central business district than a such farther out areas as Inwood Island, Van Cortland Park, or Jamaica.

Trunk subway lines serve the periphery of the Lower East Side. Manhattan's main east side route, the Lexington Avenue Line, shown as routes 4, 5, and 6 on Map B, skirts the edge of the community, slightly west of the Bowery. In this part of Manhattan it serves mainly areas where people work rather than residential sections. Thus at the Spring and Bleeker Stations during the morning rush hours (7 to 10 AM) an average of only 800 and 1,100 people (presumably residents) enter the stations respectively, while in the evening hours (4 to 6 PM) almost 5,000 and 4,100 people go through the turnstile on their way home. The other main routes, the B, D, and F lines, cut through the corner of the Lower East Side clearly avoiding the residential heartland. Even at the Duane and Essex Streets station, in the heart of the residential community, morning passengers exceeded homebound workers only by 900, 4,300 as against 3,400 persons. The 14th Street Canarsie Line (LL) while potentially valuable as a cross-town connection to several north-south trunks, runs along the extreme northern edge of the neighborhood before it disappears into Brooklyn. Two other lines, the M and QJ, provide service to sections, downtown Manhattan and Brooklyn, that do not attract Lower East Siders. It is one wonders about the utility of a station such as the Bowery which collects fares from only about 1,000 people a day. Much could be done to make the area surrounding the Bowery a place for work and living and to develop jobs in parts of Brooklyn and downtown Manhattan, places that are more accessible from the Lower East Side than many sections of Manhattan.

It is estimated that about half of the almost 190,000 people on the Lower East Side live more than two long blocks (a reasonable standard for lower Manhattan) from a subway station. The major new subway improvement scheduled for Manhattan, the F and Avenue line running from the Bronx and upper Manhattan to Broad Street at the tip of the island, will not really provide service for any of these people. It will essentially duplicate existing routes by giving about 20,000 people convenient access to another route. This fact was recognized by the Metropolitan Trans-

*An Analysis of the Transportation Requirements of Residents of Poverty Areas in New York City. New York University, Graduate School of Business Administration, 1968.

sit Authority, the agency responsible for rapid transit, in its assessment of the new lines it is planning in the city.

"The new routes will serve largely to improve the quality of service to present rapid transit users rather than to generate new rapid transit commuters. They will bring about a relatively small increase in total ridership."

In describing the Second Avenue line, a city report noted that:

"It will provide a new link between Midtown and Downtown Manhattan, serve the burgeoning office developments along or near Water Street, accommodate the growing East Side residential areas below 34th Street, and provide a fast direct route to Lower Manhattan from Queens trains."

Responding to criticism that the Lower East Side was being neglected by the new Second Avenue line, the Authority has advanced (and the city has approved) an additional route. As shown on Map 8, the supplementary loop route using a combination of existing and new trackage, will extend from Second Avenue and Houston Street eastward to Avenue C and then north to 14th Street to join up with the 14th Street Crosstown Canarsie line and west on these tracks to Eighth Avenue. The loop will have a stop at Avenue C and 7th Street. Two kinds of service will be available on the new route: a shuttle running between Second Avenue and Houston Street on one end to Eighth Avenue and 14th Street on the other, and Sixth Avenue trains that will join the loop at Second Avenue and Houston Street, swing around to 14th Street and Eighth Avenue and then return on this route.

Projected peak hour service on this rather complex system if indeed it is built, is 12 trains an hour in each direction; six shuttle trains and six through (Sixth Avenue) trains. Thus, the wait at peak hours will be ten minutes between through trains, certainly not a high level of service and possibly fifteen minutes at off-peak times. However, there may even be problems in attaining these levels of service. The 14th Street-Canarsie line, along which the loop trains will run, now carries 18 trains an hour at peak times. Although the theoretical capacity is 30 per hour (the 18 currently run plus the 12 new trains on the loop) it may be impossible to achieve this level because of terminal and switching problems at the terminal in Brooklyn. Moreover, it is uncertain whether the Sixth Avenue line, which will be coming in at minimum headways from Brooklyn during the peak hours, will be able to handle the new trains assigned to the loop. Projected service levels may also be affected by the curves on the loop at the ends of Avenue C, where trains will have to slow down and mechanical failures are more likely.

Although the Avenue C loop will go through the heart of the dense Lower East Side and will permit a tie-in with the important Sixth Ave-

nue line, its utility may be very limited. Thousands of families living in the southern part of the community will still not be near a subway station. The one station planned, at Avenue C and Seventh Street, will restrict the effective service of the loop. However, additional stops will be hard to emplace; they cannot be built too near 14th Street or Houston Street where the tracks curve; while the distance between Avenue C and First Avenue where the Second Avenue station has an entrance is too short for another stop. It is possible that the loop will turn out to be a \$50 million placation for the Lower East Side, providing a lower level of service than should be available to the community. A diversion of the Second Avenue line along Avenue A would have cost only about \$5 million more than the loop and would have offered direct trunk line service at several stations along a route cleaving the Lower East Side. Many people will still need to take a bus and subway to get out of the Lower East Side. For a regular worker, this comes to six dollars a week, or as much as 10 percent of gross wages at the minimum wage level.

In discussing the economy Chapters II and 12 note that the unskilled and semi-skilled jobs that much of the Lower East Side's labor force holds are leaving Manhattan. If residents are to hold these jobs they will have to be able to get to the dispersed locations in the other boroughs and even the inner suburbs, where they are moving. Rapid transit connections such as the loop will provide to the older manufacturing areas of Manhattan will not be sufficient; residents will have to be able to get to Brooklyn, Queens, and parts of New Jersey. For example, the 14th Street Canarsie line along the edge of the community serves many of the industrial areas in Brooklyn, including the new Flatlands Industrial Park. Clearly, economic development and transit planning must be connected to enable lower income residents of the Lower East Side to share in the job opportunities that are opening up outside of a changing Manhattan.

BUS

As Map 9 shows, the Lower East Side is criss-crossed by a multitude of bus lines, with a good number terminating in the area. The basic pattern of bus service is north-south along the number and letter avenues and their continuations below Houston Street. Several of these lines and some of the east-west lines serve as feeders to the subway stations, such as Union Square and Astor Place. Although the most rapid and complete bus service is north-south, judging from the importance of the west side and midtown as work places, many people would benefit by more frequent and direct service west and northwest out of the Lower East Side bulge. Thus, the map shows proposals for at least three new bus routes that would compensate for the gaps in east-west travel. One of these routes is a low fare, frequent service loop running along Delancey and Houston Streets to serve the commercial center of the Lower East Side.

As subways will apparently not meet the Lower East Side's transit needs, other types of solutions are required. The flexibility of the bus, the relatively short distance of many trips by residents, and the advantages of a rearranged street system (see other parts of this Chapter) strongly suggest that surface transit could handle much of the community's travel demands. New well-planned routes (combined with rearranged existing routes), improved levels of service,

*Metropolitan Transportation: a Program for Action, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, 1969.

**Standards for Rapid Transit Expansion, New York City Transportation Administration and other city agencies, 1969.



ION 8

PEJE, TRIAN PATH'

free transfers between bus and subway and better information for riders could provide good transit for the Lower East Side. Even such problems as air pollution could be partly resolved by use of the proper bus, such as an electrically powered vehicle.

It can be suggested that the \$50 million the MTA is going to spend on a circuitous loop subway might be better spent on a superior bus system for the Lower East Side. Added to the present system, such an expenditure could provide the needed flexibility and coverage. If up to \$50 million were invested, enough vehicles, personnel and free transfers for a local bus system, in addition to tangible economic gains for the community, could result.

WALKING

Walking is still the main means used by Lower East Siders to shop, go to school and do the

score of tasks associated with city life. A good number of people even walk to work. As important as subways, busses and autos are, most journeys outside the home are on foot. This report offers many ideas for making walking more refreshing and pleasurable, ranging from simple things like cleaning the streets and sidewalks to more momentous tasks, such as removing through traffic from many residential blocks and devoting certain shopping streets to strolling and common pleasures.

In a city neighborhood where thoroughfares are so frequent it would be a relief to have some streets and common spaces set aside and maintained as places for people to walk.

Illustration 8 suggests the beginnings of such a plan. Streets, parks and paths through housing projects are organized and articulated as places where walking might be made especially pleasant. The streets may be those, such as St. Marks Place and Orchard, along which things happen and people are to be seen; the parks are the more important places of assembly, such as Tompkins Square. These in turn can lead to paths through housing complexes, which in turn lead to bridges over FDR Drive and to an East River Park that invites and delights. A variety of means can be used to define and attract along the paths: other people, walking, playing or sitting; shops and places where people gather; the life of the street and architectural treatment. The Lower East Side offers much to begin with in the way of street life and events to make walking pleasant. Every act of rebuilding should help quicken this spirit.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SUMMARY

The Lower East Side is part of a city and region that produce and are subject to intense environmental despoliation. Within the city, the Lower East Side leads other neighborhoods in having the highest air pollution levels. In other, unmeasured categories of pollution, such as noise and refuse, the Lower East Side also doubtless ranks high. If it is to survive ecologically, along with the other parts of the metropolis, fundamental changes in individual behavior, political and social values, and collective practices will be needed. Nevertheless, a considerable share of the pollution that afflicts the Lower East Side is of local origin and can be relieved by rather moderate measures such as regulatory safeguards, economic charges, and legal prohibitions.

Air pollution on the Lower East Side is caused mainly by old and faulty heating systems and incinerators in tenements, and by an excess of vehicular traffic. The types of air contamination that are prevalent have been chemically proven to be dangerous to health, particularly in older people, and to be closely associated with respiratory and cardiac diseases. The uniform height of the tenements tends to trap the air in the narrow dividing spaces and intensify the degree of pollution.

The noxious fumes from tenement buildings should be diminished by a far larger number of inspectors, by enforcement of the law requiring landlords to repair or replace heating equipment, and by special city loans for such repairs or replacements.

The Lower East Side is a major corridor for interborough traffic, with three major bridges constantly feeding a steady stream of cars into the area. Major changes in traffic patterns are recommended to reduce the flow of vehicles. Certain streets should be closed to traffic, and parking and other traffic regulations should be more strictly enforced. Tolls might be imposed on the bridges to further reduce the traffic flow, and the possibility of closing the Williamsburg Bridge might even be considered.

Noise, water pollution, and an abundance of refuse are the other major pollutants of the atmosphere. The overwhelming clatter in the neighborhood--caused primarily by heavy stop-start traffic, the screech of the elevated subways on the bridges, construction, and the clamor of garbage cans and trucks--could be remedied by a reduction of traffic flow, and by the relatively simple means of requiring less noisy equipment for construction and sanitation workers. Reduction of water pollution (in the East River)

is rather more complex, and would require participation at various government levels in the construction of interceptor lines, sewage treatment plants, and so forth.

Ubiquitous garbage is the most serious problem after air pollution, and though it is less lethal, its effect upon the spirit is certainly debilitating. The tenement buildings are hardly designed to accommodate the vast amount of refuse produced in today's consumer society. Although theoretically a six-day-a-week collection schedule is maintained, in actual practice this is rarely true. In an area like the Lower East Side even more frequent collection is needed, perhaps twice daily (but not during nighttime hours, as happens often now, waking residents with clattering noise). An educational program for tenants and superintendents, stressing the hours of collection, would help, as would a manpower recruitment campaign in the neighborhood itself.

Aside from these forms of environmental pollution, the neighborhood suffers from a prevailing ugliness, caused by dirty facades of tenements, abandoned cars, littered vacant lots, and offensive dog excrement. All of these could be inexpensively remedied by such measures as more efficient car removal, city loans for cleaning and painting the outside of buildings, the use of lots for parking or vast-pocket parks, and specially designated dog runs. The barring of new industries that would cause increased truck traffic and offensive odors is also suggested.

Many recent environmental laws have been enacted, but their effectiveness depends on public education and the degree of enforcement. Since present enforcement measures are obviously inadequate, it is proposed that a special environmental police force be established, with local residents as officers empowered to serve summonses for violations; this force would bring cases to a special tribunal, which would avoid the backlog at the criminal courts and deal only with environmental offenders. Since the problem is so extreme, such a solution would be the only effectual means to restore some degree of attractiveness and health to the community.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

Caution: Living on the Lower East Side may be hazardous to your health.

Life on the Lower East Side, whether one lives in a crowded tenement or a comfortable apartment building, is a constant assault on the senses and, in many respects, is a hazard to health—physical and psychological. The air that everyone breathes is literally poisoned.

The roar of traffic, the scream of sirens, the clanging of garbage cans, the whine of garbage trucks, and the general clamor from the street distract and overwhelm the mind. The dreariness of garbage-strawed tenement blocks and monotonous housing projects depresses the eye and oppresses the spirit.

Abating and eventually removing the many pollutants that impair the quality of life on the Lower East Side are essential parts of community rebuilding. The kinds of pollution that plague the Lower East Side—air, noise, and water, and a certain kind of visual depression—are common to many densely settled urban districts. But because the Lower East Side is one of New York City's oldest sections, as well as one of its most crowded, heavily travelled, and poorest, the extent of pollution is particularly acute.

This chapter explores the most blatant forms of pollution on the Lower East Side and offers recommendations for restoring a degree of environmental health.

AIR POLLUTION

Studies conducted by the city's Department of Air Pollution Control as far back as the 1930's reveal that continuing air pollution levels on the Lower East Side are among the very highest in the City of New York. Since New York City is generally recognized to be the most polluted city in the country, residents of the Lower East Side have valid cause for alarm.

Rather than being imported from industrial plants in New Jersey and other parts of the city, most of the pollution in the Lower East Side's air is locally generated by heating systems, incinerators, and vehicular traffic. Although Consolidated Edison and other industrial sources inside and outside the neighborhood also produce a significant amount of pollution, it is estimated to be less than the combined emissions from local sources. To a considerable extent, therefore, the quality of the air in the Lower East Side can be controlled by actions taken in the community, such as upgrading heating systems and directing traffic away from residential blocks.

Heating Systems and Incinerators

The concentration of sulphur dioxide, one of the most deadly agents of air pollution on the Lower East Side, is consistently the highest in the city by a wide margin. Pollutants from sulphur dioxide and other closely related compounds come primarily, in the case of this area, from the burning of coal and oil in residential heating systems.

Even after residual fuel (No. 6 oil) sold and used in the city had been limited to a 1 percent sulphur content (by October 1, 1969), the sulphur dioxide reading during the 1969-70 heating season on the Lower East Side averaged .16 parts per million (ppm) and at times reached hourly peaks of .82 ppm. For 94 percent of the time the readings were in excess of the New York State Ambient Air Quality Standards for sulphur dioxide (.10 ppm daily average). In the month of January, 1970, all the readings exceeded the permissible daily average, with a daily average reading of .19 ppm, or close to twice the standard set by the state.

In addition, the Lower East Side leads the city in two other forms of air pollution: smoke-shade and suspended particulate matter. Smoke-shade is a measure of the total dirt content in the air without differentiating its composition. Particulate matter can be tiny aerosols, either fine or solid, or liquid particles, that may be small enough to remain suspended in the air until dispersed by rain, wind, or inhalation, or large enough to settle to the ground. Particulate matter may be harmful if inhaled, and is especially harmful if inhaled when mixed with other polluting agents such as sulphur dioxide.

The Lower East Side had the highest readings in the city for settleable particulate matter in 1969, with an average reading of 1.39 or over twice the basic standard set by the state. New York State's Ambient Air Quality Standards require, on a 30-day sampling basis, a reading of less than .60 half of the time, and a reading of less than .90 for 84 percent of the time. The 1.39 reading is derived from 30-day averages for the year.

The significance of the above levels of sulphur dioxide and particulate matter, according to current knowledge, is that the two pollutants, either alone, together, or in combination with moisture such as the fog or drizzle common to New York, create particularly dangerous human health conditions, especially for the sick and elderly. Prolonged exposure to relatively low levels of sulphur dioxide and particulate matter has been associated with increased cardiovascular morbidity in older persons. The United States Public Health Service has reported that adverse health effects have been observed when the annual mean level of sulphur dioxide exceeded a mere .04 ppm, or one-quarter of the average reading in the Lower East Side during the 1969-70 heating season! Prolonged exposure to higher concentrations of pollutants has been associated with an increase in respiratory disease death rates. In other studies it has been demonstrated that the annual incidence of respiratory disease was directly proportional to the annual sulphur dioxide levels.

The sources of the high levels of sulphur dioxide in the Lower East Side are almost certainly the thousands of residential heating systems in old law tenements and housing projects, and to a lesser extent, industrial installations, both within and outside the area. It is likely that the Consolidated Edison generating plants along the East River, which are often upwind of the Lower East Side and at a proper distance to have an effect, produce some of the locally measured sulphur oxides. However, because the Lower East Side is one of the most densely populated areas of the city and has a large concentration of the older, poorly maintained and operated heating plants, the greatest share of the sulphur oxide pollution is produced by residential oil burners.

Thousands of tenement structures give the Lower East Side an unusually even five and six-story profile. Girding the edge of the area from 14th Street to the Brooklyn Bridge, along the East River and spotted through the interior are taller modern apartment buildings. It has been observed in the course of pollution studies in the Lower East Side that the nearly uniform height of the tenement buildings, crowded together on narrow streets in a repetitive pattern, tends to trap the air. Airborne pollution from both vehicles and furnaces settles and often remains in the narrow spaces between the tenements. In contrast to other neighborhoods where varying building heights and textures create air flows that disperse pollution, the air masses near the ground in this neighborhood tend to remain static. This phenomenon, when combined with the thousands of heating and incinerating plants, reinforces the high concentration of aerial pollutants.

Further reduction of the sulphur content in heating fuels may bring local sulphur oxide levels down to maximum permissible levels. By 1971 a reduction of the sulphur content to .37 percent has been mandated by the state. In light of the high sulphur oxide levels persisting in the Lower East Side and other neighborhoods it might be advisable for the city to expedite the reduction to .37 sulphur content prior to the 1970-71 heating season. After this, the state and the city would then be able to determine whether the .37 sulphur level is sufficient to bring New York City and its more seriously affected sub-areas down to safe levels.

Certain problems arise with respect to the reduction of particulate matter and smokeshade. The various large housing projects, where it is easier to enforce the standards, have or hopefully will soon have conformed to the new standards for heating systems and refuse disposal. A different situation pertains in the tenement buildings which produce the major share of local non-vehicular air pollution. Visual inspections of the tenement areas, especially during the winter heating months, reveals numerous tall-tale black plumes rising above the rooftops. It is also known by virtue of the age of the tenements and the care they customarily receive, that their boilers and incinerators (if any) are usually quite old and inefficiently operated and maintained.

Most tenements in the Lower East Side use No. 4 oil burners which are not required to be upgraded or inspected under Local Law 14. Also, the No. 4 burner does not require a full-time superintendent and is only checked once a week. Under the Air Pollution Control Law, burners using No. 6 oil must be upgraded or converted to No. 4 oil. (No. 4 oil has slightly less than 1 percent sulphur content and is acceptable under the present law.) All upgrades and conversions must be filed with the Department of Air Pollution Control and a certificate of operation obtained. But tenements already using No. 4 oil will continue to do so without benefit of a new inspection or certificate of operation. Consequently, old and inefficient No. 4 burners in the tenements will continue collectively to foul the air. Furthermore, incinerators which have not been upgraded or discontinued will keep in operation--unless the violations are spotted by inspectors from the Department of Air Pollution Control. Undoubtedly, the solution to a large part of the air pollution problem in the Lower East Side will depend upon strict law enforcement and the extent to which owners actually repair or replace defective boiler systems and repair or eliminate illegal incinerator systems.

Several recommendations are for the desired goals. The number of inspectors must be increased to realistically handle the air pollution problem over the city. It would not be unreasonable to expect at least ten times the present force of 60 inspectors. Of equal importance is a real-time program to see that landlords, particularly tenement owners, can and do comply with the law. If experience with Building Code enforcement is any guide, the present formula for enforcing the air pollution control laws, involving notice of violation, summons, fine, and (at least theoretically) jail terms, will not work. Violations will be ignored; judges will be reluctant to impose jail sentences, and fine will be relatively light.

In cases where correction of a violation might require a new burner or boiler, landlords already in a precarious financial situation might decide instead to abandon their buildings. Fines and criminal sanctions are rarely successful in compelling compliance in matters of this kind. The solution to the enforcement dilemma might be a program designed to provide small low-interest rate loans to owners of otherwise reasonably sound buildings to allow them to make the necessary repairs or replacements. The special program could be attached to the present municipal loan program or set up independently since it is of such a specialized and limited nature. Without special financial assistance many tenement owners will not be able to afford the necessary improvements. In some cases the city might simply do the job itself, as it does in the emergency repair program, and take a lien on the property.

The relationship between dilapidated housing and health should provide a further incentive to replace these tenements. When planning new structures, however, the fact that air pollution levels can also be reduced by the way buildings are designed and constructed should be kept in mind. It is now known that variations in the height of structures, ground massing, configuration and the disposition of open space create air turbulence and breeze patterns in and around buildings that will inhibit the formation of static air masses and tend to disperse polluted air. The use of porous or nonporous materials and heat-absorbing or reflecting materials and colors can also have an effect on micro-climatic air flow and pollution levels. As large quantities of new housing will soon be built on the Lower East Side, the relation between building form and materials and the climate near the ground should receive very close attention.

Vehicular Emissions

The other major cause of air pollution on the Lower East Side is, as almost everywhere else, the motor vehicle. The situation is intensified on the Lower East Side by a combination of factors. First, much of the area is a corridor for traffic going into and out of and through Manhattan. As discussed elsewhere, the Williamsburg, Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges feed enormous numbers of passenger vehicles and trucks (large and small) through the neighborhood's main and secondary streets. Secondly, the archaic street pattern originally designed for a modest flow of horse-drawn vehicles does not suffice to meet modern traffic demands. Heavy volumes of traffic, the existence of three distinct but not always continuous street patterns, and a profusion of short blocks and narrow local streets create almost ideal conditions for high levels of vehicular pollution. Much of the traffic moving on the Lower East Side's

traffic in the area, up to the level of the light.

The pollutants associated with the internal combustion engine are carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, and nitrogen oxides. While these are discharged in a given area, pollution is proportional to the efficiency of combustion, the fuel content, the number of vehicles, and the time vehicles spend in the area. If vehicular pollution is to be reduced, these factors must be changed with respect to fuel content. It is hoped that appropriate steps will be taken by the Federal Government to reduce the fuel content in gasoline. The State of New York should require exhaust control systems in new automobiles and examination of the crank case ventilator and exhaust control systems of vehicles as a part of the state automobile inspection program.

As to the number of vehicles in the neighborhood, it would seem entirely reasonable in light of the severe traffic congestion in Lower Manhattan, the recognized pollution threat and other adverse effects caused by traffic, to reduce the number of vehicles travelling in the area. Considering the Lower East Side's role as a gateway to Manhattan, a thorough-wide traffic corridor, and a through route to New Jersey, if the number of vehicles on its streets is to be reduced, it will have to be a part of a comprehensive plan for controlling and redirecting traffic. Among ideas now being discussed, one which limits vehicular use in midtown and downtown Manhattan would also reduce the deleterious impact of traffic in the Lower East Side.

Perhaps the most effective way to control vehicular traffic on Manhattan streets would be to limit its entry into the borough. In regard to the Lower East Side, this could be accomplished by imposing tolls on the East River bridges. Such tolls, especially if they were, in the case of automobiles, based on the number of passengers and the time of day, could considerably reduce the number of passenger vehicles on the Lower East Side's main routes. Along with limitations on automobile entry and use, it would be necessary to upgrade service on the subway and bus lines, to offer travellers an attractive and relatively inexpensive alternate means of travel. In an integrated and balanced transportation system, the bridge tolls could be used to help finance a proper improvement of the bus and subway lines. Trucks on their way to New Jersey might also be encouraged to use the Verrazano Narrows Bridge instead of the Manhattan routes.

If traffic could be sufficiently reduced through tolls and other restrictions and the "horn" route alternative to the Lower Manhattan Expressway adopted, it might then be possible to consider closing the Williamsburg Bridge to vehicular traffic. As outrageous as it may seem at first glance to close a major interborough bridge, rational traffic considerations may well justify it. The Williamsburg Bridge is poorly situated for travel to almost any place in Manhattan. On the Brooklyn side, its main value is as a link to the Brooklyn Queens Expressway, a virtue that is duplicated by the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges and the Queens-Midtown Tunnel. The bridge itself is an especially disruptive feature, penetrating into the Lower East Side along Joraleyn Street, splitting local residents' communities, and creating a noise zone of visual, aural and respiratory contamination.

In order to utilize the Lower East Side's streets, it will be necessary to eliminate

traffic in the area, up to the level of the light. The pollutants associated with the internal combustion engine are carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, and nitrogen oxides. While these are discharged in a given area, pollution is proportional to the efficiency of combustion, the fuel content, the number of vehicles, and the time vehicles spend in the area. If vehicular pollution is to be reduced, these factors must be changed with respect to fuel content. It is hoped that appropriate steps will be taken by the Federal Government to reduce the fuel content in gasoline. The State of New York should require exhaust control systems in new automobiles and examination of the crank case ventilator and exhaust control systems of vehicles as a part of the state automobile inspection program.

NOISE POLLUTION

There is a remarkable amount of loud and disturbing noise in the Lower East Side. The racket produced by motor vehicle traffic is the prime cause of the high noise level. This kind of pollution is particularly acute because of the congested stop-start traffic which creates a cacophony of roaring engines, screeching brakes, strident police whistles, blaring horns and even shouting motorists. Another aspect of traffic-produced noise pollution is the racket of the elevated subway trains on the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges.

Other sources of noise pollution are construction, with its jackhammers and air compressors, and garbage collection--often late at night--bringing the primalval whine of the grinding machine and the clang and clatter of cans and lids.

Another local kind of aural nuisance is the incessant nighttime drumming in Tompkins Square Park during the warmer months. There is also noise of a kind reminiscent of passages in Henry Roth's Call It Sleep:

Here in 9th Street it wasn't the sun that swamped one as one left the doorway, it was sound--an avalanche of sound. There were countless children, there were countless baby carriages, there were countless mothers. And to the screams, rebukes and bickering of these, a seemingly endless file of hucksters joined their bawling cries. On Avenue D horse-cars clattered and banged. Avenue D was thronged with beer wagons, garbage carts and coal trucks. There were many automobiles, some blunt and rangy, some with high straw poops, honking.

Traffic restrictions, mentioned earlier as a means of reducing vehicular-produced air pollution, would also relieve the eardrums. Technological improvements that would reduce construction noise may only come about if there is a strongly enforced noise abatement code that will compel builders to use quieter machinery on job sites. Mandatory use some type of non-clattering trashcans for rubbish would eliminate much noise from this source. In addition,

time to being quieter. For this reason, these containers do not rust or rust and are easier to clean. Collection of these quiet containers should be limited to normal working hours, perhaps between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m.

The Department of Sanitation's practice of assigning a third collection shift in the winter from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. for snow removal along residential streets must be discontinued when there is no snow to be removed. In the interest of peace and quiet for all citizens of the city, nighttime collections on the Lower East Side during 1969 and 1970 duplicated collections made during the day and produced many complaints from residents awakened at all hours of the night and early morning.

The latter of the elevated subways on the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges could be reduced by re-installing the train tracks on solid rubber ties. Initially this should be done as a matter of course whenever tracks or ties are removed or replaced. The vehicular noises from the bridges could also be lessened by partly filling in the walls along the bridge sidewalks with insulating material.

Laws against disturbing the peace should be enforced to eliminate drumming and loud music making in the parks and elsewhere after a reasonable hour, perhaps 10 p.m. This is especially important in the summer when windows are open and street noise is more objectionable.

WATER POLLUTION

The East River, which forms the eastern boundary of the area, is, as is well-known, exceptionally polluted. At present it is of no use to residents other than to provide some relief from the monotonous vista of tenements and to serve as a foreground across which can be seen the smoke (polluting of course) from the factories on the Queens and Brooklyn shores. Proposals for re-generating East River Park presented in the next to the last chapter will at least make the shoreline more accessible to residents. Cleaning the waters (might they ever be available for swimming once again?) will require large expenditures and city, state and federal cooperation in the construction of interceptor lines, and sewage treatment plants and the control of industrial polluters along the abused shoreline.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

Next to air pollution, refuse disposal is the most serious environmental problem confronting the Lower East Side. In the long run, of course, air pollution is a more lethal problem, but it can be sold with a fair degree of certainty that the most unpleasant aspect of daily living on the Lower East Side for most residents is the sight and smell of refuse so most everywhere almost all the time. Rotting garbage, assorted street litter, including furniture and mattresses and canine excrement, are found in plentiful supply on the neighborhood's streets and vacant lots. This is particularly a nuisance in the summertime when the streets become a communal living room. Tenement buildings were simply not designed with provision for collecting, storing and disposing of the large quantities of refuse that our consumer society discards. Basements, staircases and streets become the depot for garbage.

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refuse disposal. This might take the form of installing hoppers, compactors, containers serving several buildings, or simply more frequent day time refuse collection. Even now, periodic collection should be made to insure that each building has an adequate number of garbage cans. There should be enough cans to hold three days' accumulation of refuse, with residents and building superintendents urged to use plastic trashcan liners.

This practice as well as the use of other voluntary disposal procedures should be advertised as part of an environmental education program. A good place to launch such an educational effort would be in the supermarkets and other food stores where much of the refuse that ends up as refuse originates. Of course, abating the refuse at its source, for example, by replacing the disposable containers with returnable ones, would be a far more effective means than cleaning up the neighborhood after it has been misused.

The sanitation workers' strike in 1968 demonstrated how dependent the Lower East Side is on regular and frequent garbage collection. It maintained even a semblance of street cleanliness. Although there is supposed to be a six-day-a-week residential refuse pickup in the Lower East Side, the schedule is often not maintained. It may well be that an old, crowded district needs more frequent sanitation service than other neighborhoods. Such differential needs should then be built into municipal service and operation patterns. Inadequate refuse collection can be a result of insufficient manpower and/or poor mechanical equipment. Aording to recent reports, the Sanitation Department is considerably undermanned. In fact, it was the only municipal agency exempted from a recent "freeze" on hiring employees. The manpower shortage might be relieved and jobs opened up to ghetto residents if the Sanitation Department actively recruited in areas such as the Lower East Side where refuse collection itself is substandard. The pressing need for new (and quieter) equipment and better maintenance for the existing fleet is indicated by the constant difficulty the Sanitation Department has in keeping all its equipment on the streets. On a recent day in one of the two Lower East Side sanitation districts, 14 of the 31 collection trucks were not usable because of mechanical failure.

Street cleaning is closely associated with the enforcement of parking restrictions. In order to clean the gutters and streets, especially in the more crowded tenement blocks, a narrow side of the street parking should be strictly enforced. If parking does not deter vehicles, perhaps cars will have to be towed away, and mechanical sweepers and street sweeper staffs, men with barrels and brooms should be assigned to these blocks. This might cut the garbage in the neighborhood environment. But this is a part-time work to carry out during the hot summer and full-time work during the winter. A part of the manpower should be assigned to landlords must be compelled to keep the sidewalks in front of their buildings swept and free of refuse as required by law.

ENVIRONMENTAL UGLINESS

The sights, sounds and smells of a neighborhood can have a subtle but pervasive effect on the spirit of its people and the quality of neighborhood life. The cumulative effect of foul air, unpleasant noise and visual ugliness can materially influence one's state of mind and ability to act, or even to withstand the tensions of city life. There are a number of environmental factors, some of which have already been cited, that collectively contribute to an overwhelming sense of ugliness and neglect on the Lower East Side.

The most obvious source of visual offensiveness, as noted above, is the refuse, and litter that covers streets, sidewalks and vacant lots and never seems to diminish no matter how many "clean-up campaigns," "accelerated pick-ups" or "educational programs" are organized. Maybe people who are constantly reminded that they are tenants in a depressed, second-hand place and who must struggle to maintain even a bare level of existence, cannot be expected to take much pride in the appearance of their block and neighborhood. Other environmental intrusions are the abandoned structures, vacant storefronts, abandoned autos and abundance of canine excrement. Even the grays and accumulated grime covering the facades of tenements are an affront to the senses and a reflection of the more lasting neglect those buildings and their inhabitants suffer.

Most of the measures discussed in the section on pollution would also serve to improve visual aspects of life on the Lower East Side. The following specific recommendations, briefly noted, will also help relieve "visual pollution."

Streets and sidewalks should be repaved and repaved when patching has raised the level of the street so that the gutter no longer works as a channel for water. This would help keep debris and water off the sidewalk. Public trash baskets should be placed on every corner. If necessary they should be stationary and equipped with removable liners. Superintendents and residents should be advised when large discarded items (i.e., furniture) may be left on the streets for collection. Signs in local stores or on street poles and bi-lingual signs in each building would be effective.

Because of its population density, the necessary reliance on used cars, and its apparent popularity as an auto dumping ground, the Lower East Side is a cemetery for an inordinate number of abandoned cars. Despite new procedures for towing away abandoned automobiles, such vehicles continue to remain on the streets for a very long period of time, often months. More equipment is needed to handle the task. Communication between the Department of Sanitation and the private towing contractors should be improved so that all abandoned cars are removed within a week. Other measures, such as building a disposal bounty into the purchase price or requiring proof of legal disposal when registering a new automobile might also be useful.

Since vacant lots, many of which are owned by the city, tend to become garbage dumps, and parked cars impede proper street cleaning, these lots could be used as neighborhood parking lots

on a first-come first-served unattended basis. The city could also lease privately owned lots for a small sum. No preparation of lots is actually necessary other than clearing away the rubble and broken glass. Even a narrow tenement lot could probably provide enough space for at least one row of angle parked cars.

A year-round (not just summer) after-school job program should be organized for teen-aged boys who would serve as clean-up and maintenance squads for streets, paths, and vacant lots. Such squads should be able to work with the Department of Sanitation. They and other groups, such as church and youth clubs, could be provided with materials to build vest-pocket parks and temporary play areas on suitable vacant lots.

A one-time tax credit that could be used only to clean up and paint the facades of tenements should be granted by the city. The costs of this would be returned many times over in brighter and more attractive street frontage. In a further attempt to brighten an otherwise dreary neighborhood, the city, through the Parks Department, or the Board of Education, should make materials available for wall painting to properly supervised groups of children. In addition, the city might commission large professional wall paintings, which have been rather well-received and have brightened many dull vistas in other neighborhoods.

In order to discourage the lingering presence of abandoned buildings, the city should expedite its acquisition methods. In those areas where rehabilitation is feasible, abandoned buildings should be legally taken over by the city and reused quickly with funds made available to capable local groups for rehabilitation into low-rent units. Where rehabilitation is not slated, such buildings should be acquired and cleared by the city much more rapidly than they are now.

Efforts should be made to renovate vacant large storefronts for use as community centers and block day-care centers. Perhaps these could be rented by the city and then subleased to local social, civic, and recreational groups which have made acceptable proposals for community use.

The establishment of new businesses that produce truck traffic noise and unpleasant odors should be prohibited, by zoning if necessary, in the interior residential blocks of the Lower East Side. The city should assist existing firms of this type to relocate in more appropriate sections of the city or along the periphery of the Lower East Side.

No activity involving many people in a daily working or living situation should be located under the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges, because of noise, vibrations, and pollution. Playgrounds do not belong in such an inhospitable setting and should be removed. These areas are essentially appropriate for their main current use: bulk storage and parking.

Although seemingly trivial, one of the truly unpleasant aspects of daily life on the Lower East Side as elsewhere in New York is the ubiquity of canine excretion on sidewalks, streets and in the parks. To accommodate a large and growing dog population (many acquired for protection by residents), spaces in public parks or vacant lots should be reserved as dog runs. These areas would be partly filled with sand and set off so that they could be periodically disinfected and cleaned by park attendants. Similar smaller stations might be installed along sidewalks out of the way of pedestrians.

If dog owners could be persuaded to see that their pets used these facilities (perhaps by means of public education and a more liberal distribution of summonses), the condition of the sidewalks, parks and streets would be greatly improved.

As of now dogs have taken over most of the open grassy places in Tompkins Square Park. Children are restricted to the hardtop play spaces and pathways (liberally covered with broken glass most of the time) while dogs romp menacingly through the large open areas. This is particularly unfortunate in the case of the central open space containing the famous Hoving's Hill: a large mound of earth left over from the park renovation that had been a favorite spot for children. One hopes that modest changes could be made to restore a balance in the park between pets and people.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LEGISLATION

With the growing awareness of the many ways in which the environment can be contaminated, new legislation has been enacted to prevent pollution and restrain violators. Success in preserving a livable environment on the Lower East Side will depend upon the enforcement of more stringent anti-pollution regulations, severe penalties for violators, more funds for enforcement and, if necessary, incentives to government, utilities and private enterprise. Public, business and government apathy and stinginess will also have to be overcome if the environment and its inhabitants are to survive.

A large public information campaign on environmental protection has recently been undertaken. Success will depend as much upon enforcement as upon public education. The prospect for the successful enforcement of environmental protection legislation is rather bleak. The inability of the city to seriously enforce its parking

regulations, housing maintenance and the brief unsuccessful effort to enact a pollution control legislation, should cast serious doubt on value of the present enforcement system. Certain basic problems are common to the enforcement of environmental protection legislation where there may be numerous instances of violation. First, there are too few inspectors on the streets citing violators. Second, the cases are heard in the city's criminal court which has an astoundingly overcrowded docket. Finally, the nature of the violations, abuse of something as universal and intangible as the environment, are often derogated in a court that is oriented to the redress of specific wrongs against people. Consequently, a new approach is suggested that could make the enforcement and prosecution of environmental laws and regulations more effective. An environmental police force could be set up under the jurisdiction of the Environmental Protection Administration. The officers would be empowered to issue summonses and would be hired from the local communities most in need of environmental maintenance. Each officer would be assigned to a small district within which he would be responsible for all environmental law enforcement activity. The officer would serve summonses for violation of alternate side of the street parking regulations, anti-litter ordinances, air pollution controls and other laws, including street refuse and canine litter. He could report abandoned cars to the police and see that they are towed away quickly; report heavy accumulation of trash to the Department of Sanitation; report abandoned buildings to the Housing and Development Administration, which could start proceedings to acquire them for rehabilitation or demolition. Citizens groups perhaps in the form of a Sanitation Community Council could cooperate with district environmental police and with the regular local operational staff of the Environmental Protection Administration.

Also supporting the environmental police would be a special administrative tribunal to hear violations and a special section of the District Attorney's office to prosecute them. The entire record-keeping procedure from inspection through note of violation to ultimate disposition could be computerized to avoid the heavy administrative problem common in parking and housing violations.

Such an approach would obviously require a considerable amount of planning and coordination, not to mention new legislation. However, in light of the imperative nature of environmental protection, enforcement of the laws which will determine, to a great degree, the quality of the life on the Lower East Side and the city as a whole should be approached in an imaginative fashion.

8. HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

SUMMARY

It has been said that while the United States is probably the best country in the world in which to have a serious illness, it is one of the worst in which to suffer from minor disorders. Despite major advances in American medical technology, fifteen countries have longer life expectancies, and the infant mortality rate is lower in fourteen other nations. Meanwhile the cost of health care, inadequate as it often is, has spiraled. In the year ending September 30, 1969, the consumer price index for the region increased 6 percent. The medical care component, however, went even higher, rising 9.4 percent. In the United States medical care is a middle-class luxury item; the poor of the Lower East Side are victims of the medical care system as they are of the dilapidated tenements that contribute to their health problems. Even the prime causes of death in the area -- cancer and heart disease -- are illnesses where earlier detection by regular visits can help; it is precisely those habits of regular care that the poor cannot afford.

In a predominantly poor area the problem of cost is magnified and the crisis is compounded by the combination of already insufficient services and the health problems aggravated by poverty. Even the presence of clinics, health centers and hospitals is no guarantee of good health care. People must be informed about health care matters and be willing to use the services, which must be reasonably convenient to reach. More important, health care must be financially obtainable. The varieties of services offered and the way they are offered must be appropriate to the community's needs.

By 1975, with the continued immigration of the Chinese, and the construction of additional new housing through urban renewal and the vest-pocket program, the Lower East Side population is expected to be almost 200,000. The white population, the group probably most able to meet its health needs, will drop to less than half the total, while the Puerto Rican and non-white segments, the groups with the greatest health needs and the least ability to pay, will grow.

The major obstacles that must be overcome in order to meet the needs of the Lower East Side population fall into three categories: accessibility, cost, and delivery. In addition, the Lower East Side is faced with more unique problems that result from the presence of large numbers of elderly, Chinese and Puerto Rican persons, the high incidence of drug addiction and alcoholism, and environmental factors such

as air pollution and squalid housing. The chapter below on Health Services discusses in some detail the particular problems of each of these groups, and evaluates the nature and impact of the three major obstacles to good health care.

The people of the Lower East Side have available to them numerous hospitals, clinics, and other facilities, although the annual rate of medical visits per patient (2.3) is far lower than it should be. Bellevue Hospital Center, though more than a mile from the Lower East Side, serves a great many of its inhabitants, who are generally not too pleased with the attention they receive. Use of services at Bellevue has decreased in recent years as it has at other municipal hospitals, probably because of Medicaid cutbacks. Only the emergency room has treated more cases recently, indicating that those in need of medical care are tending to put it off until a crisis.

Beth Israel Medical Center is the largest facility located in the Lower East Side and has increased all its services over the past few years. Beth Israel's two affiliates, Gouverneur Health Services Program and Judson Health Center, provide satisfactory wide-ranging out-patient and emergency medical care to 70,000 Lower East Side residents. The Gouverneur has an organizational framework in which local people can participate in operation and policy making, and which doubtless contributes to its success and the community's positive feelings about the program.

The North East Neighborhood Association (NENA) Health Center is a unique clinic, with a comprehensive ambulatory program, stressing preventive medicine. NENA was planned and is run by a coalition of community groups, and is one of the few such clinics in the country.

Remedying the health situation on the Lower East Side will require a many-pronged effort on city, community and administrative levels. It need not require any significant physical expansion or encroachment on the tight land supply of the area, but rather a reorganization of programs, maximizing the use of existing facilities, and setting up small service centers patterned after the NENA model. (A simple measure like keeping clinics open day and night could substantially raise the number of annual patient visits towards the goal of six.) The concept of a small neighborhood health center, perhaps operating out of an apartment and serving 8,000 to 10,000 patients with wide referral services, is recommended. This would help solve the accessibility problem and relieve the load on existing clinics.

The need for community involvement in planning and executing health programs must be recognized and provided for at the outset. Training programs for health workers would serve the triple purpose of providing jobs for local people,

freeing doctors to spend more time on strictly medical matters, and enhancing the community's sense of involvement in the program.

Health programs at all large facilities should include special divisions to serve the area's special needs mentioned above, i.e. geriatric clinics, drug addiction treatment, alcoholism treatment, etc. Two out-patient operations are being planned for Chinatown, which should, when completed, provide centers for rallying community support to help solve environmental problems linked to health.

Plans for the New Gouverneur Hospital, scheduled for June, 1971, include using 116 of the 206 new beds for long-term in-patient care. This is not reasonable in the light of figures on in- and out-patient needs. The planned distribution should be re-examined with a view to making Gouverneur a center for day-to-day community health needs, and bearing in mind the obligation in a poor neighborhood to stress preventive medicine.

Environmental health hazards, of which the most menacing are air pollution, lead poisoning, and rats, are among the most tragic and unnecessary dangers of living in sub-standard housing. (The problem of air pollution is treated extensively in the chapter on Environment.) They would disappear if every Lower East Side family lived in a decent building. Meanwhile, the laws requiring landlords to sheath the offending walls must be strictly enforced. Education for tenants both on the causes and symptoms of lead poisoning and on rat control is badly needed.

No improvement of health facilities will be successful unless the services can be paid for, which is presently not the case. Medicaid, which for a short period offered the hope of adequate services to the poor, has been drastically cut back. A pre-paid health insurance program should be formulated for the area, with premiums adjusted according to income, public funds provided for those unable to pay. In this way, health care could be obtained on a regular basis as needed, rather than in the prevailing erratic way.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

SPECIAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Besides being subject to the normal range of health problems of any urban community, the Lower East Side has, for various reasons, certain unique problems that should be explored in order adequately to project the health services needs of the community. Because it is a slum area with a large proportion of sub-standard tenement units, its residents are susceptible to the diseases and infirmities caused by rats, poor heat, and lack of suffi-

cient space, light, and air. Its children face the dreadful consequences of lead poisoning. Moreover, exhaust emissions from a huge volume of vehicular traffic, the effusions from inefficient heating plants, and other less fully understood factors give the Lower East Side the dubious distinction of having the most severe air-pollution problem in New York City. The health hazards of air pollution are on y beginning to be explored, and deserve further research, but they are an element that can only aggravate the already serious health situation.

Drug addiction, prevalent in the Lower East Side as in other low-income areas, is a serious condition for both addicts and their victims. And the alcoholics who live along the Bowery and nearby streets not only have serious psychological and social problems requiring civic attention, but are themselves a problem for a residential community. Added to these are the high ratio of elderly people on the Lower East Side (12 percent) whose health problems are specialized (and certainly not improved by the slum conditions mentioned above) and also the Puerto Rican and Chinese groups whose language barrier often hinders their receiving adequate health care.

Obviously a health situation of this kind needs an exemplary health program, located in the community and designed to meet its special needs. The facilities and services available at present, as will be seen later, do not begin to do the job.

Elderly People

The Lower East Side numbers among its residents a large proportion of elderly people. They have greater unmet medical needs than other segments of the population because they have emotional problems and suffer from chronic illnesses, in addition to the normal disabilities of old age itself. The over-65 population of the area, now numbering some 22,000 is large. The number of non-white and Puerto Rican people over 65, while low at the moment (see Chapter 2) is expected to increase. These are the elderly persons most in need of health care.

While the elderly need more medical help than others, the quality of care that clinics offer does not encourage frequent visits. There are long periods of waiting for appointments; the atmosphere of the waiting rooms is noisy, confusing, and upsetting. In general older patients are not well-treated in city hospitals because they are more difficult to handle than other patients.

Medicare, the limited national health insurance program for the aged, also does not encourage the elderly to seek the kind of health care they need from private sources. It does not cover routine physical check-ups, dental care, prescription drugs and such items as eyeglasses and hearing aids. The Medicare recipient must also pay the first \$50 plus 20 percent of the remaining charges. For example, if the reasonable charges of covered bill amount to \$500 a year, Medicare insurance would pay \$360. The Medicare recipient must also pay a \$4 monthly premium, which is expected to increase after June, 1970.

Chinese Residents

Despite the fact that the Chinese population of the Lower East Side is believed to suffer from acute health problems such as high inci-

dence of tuberculosis, venereal disease and other diseases, there are now no health centers available in the Chinatown area. At last count there were only 22 Chinese physicians (most of them part-time) to serve a population of about 40,000. The provision of adequate health services made more difficult by the fact that many of the residents speak little or no English.

The elderly and other persons whose English is poor are reluctant to venture outside the Chinatown area to seek medical assistance. Nevertheless, because of the rapid rate of increase of the downtown Chinese community (4,000 to 5,000 persons each year), the percentage of Chinese among new patients at Gouverneur and Judson has risen from 1.5 percent of the total in 1962 to 14.3 percent in 1966 and 17.8 percent in 1967.

An unpublished study by the Community Service Society in 1962 concluded that health services to the Chinese community were disorganized and limited in quality as well as quantity. "Different age groups and health conditions are treated in different settings with little thought given to coordination of services," the report stated. "As a result a patient may be known to several different doctors affiliated with several different facilities, each unaware of the other's interest in the case."

Vital Statistics

Statistics on the causes of death of Lower East Side residents underscore the importance of early detection and preventive medical care. As in the city at large, the two leading causes of death—cancer and heart diseases—are ailments that can be abated by early treatment. It is just these forms of medical practice that the community is particularly lacking.

In 1967 (the last full year for which statistics are available) the death rate from various forms of cancer was more than 4 1/2 percent higher for the Lower East Side than for the city. (The Manhattan rate was 7 percent higher than the city rate.) The rate of deaths caused by heart and kidney ailments was almost 17 percent higher for the Lower East Side than for the entire city.

Lower East Side residents are also more likely to die from communicable diseases. Tuberculosis, a disease historically associated with congested slum conditions, claimed three times as many Lower East Side residents as it did in the entire city. While the area contained about 11 percent of Manhattan's population in 1967, 25 percent of the borough's reported tuberculosis cases originated in the Lower East Side. This was almost 10 percent of all the cases reported in the city. The incidence of venereal disease also tends to be high in the Lower East Side: more than 5 percent of the city's reported cases and close to 13 percent of the borough's cases originated in the area. (These figures are probably the most reliable because many cases are unreported, particularly by physicians who treat wealthier patients.)

Alcoholism and Homeless Men

A fairly detailed study of alcoholism on the Lower East Side, primarily in the Bowery district, will be presented here for a number of reasons. New York's "skid row" is a classic case; any reasonably thorough analysis of its problems and suggestions for their solution can serve as a prototype for similar areas in other cities. Extensive and useful data on the

Bowery's homeless men have not, for example, on drug addiction. In this age when narcotics, overpopulation, and the psychological and physiological results of growing up in poverty are the major afflictions of a slum area, the homeless men's predicament is almost anachronistic. New York City has probably learned itself more with this problem than any other large city; the Department of Social Services includes a special division devoted to services to homeless men. Nevertheless, the problem remains, and as other chapters note, it is unrealistic to conceive plans for a rehabilitated neighborhood while ignoring the

Homeless persons can be quite simply defined as those who, because of psychological problems and/or alcoholism, are unable to maintain a stable home in an apartment or even a rented room, and who are therefore led to seek out the Bowery where their subsistence can be provided for and their way of life accepted. Contrary to popular belief, not all the Bowery's homeless men are alcoholics. Many suffer from schizophrenia or brain damage. Some have a drinking problem as well as severe mental disorders. The Department of Social Services divides the homeless population into three groups by income: 1. Unskilled full-time workers and elderly pensioners whose income or pension provides maintenance at the Bowery's low standards of living. 2. Those who work intermittently at menial jobs but need help when out of work. 3. Those who work or panhandle to buy alcohol, where drinking has become the primary goal.

Until 1968 the Bowery population had declined over a twenty-year period from over 13,000 to about 5,000. During the last two years, however, the decline has stopped, and the figures have held steady. Skid Row population figures usually fluctuate with the national economy; in periods of prosperity they decline, while in periods of recession they tend to rise. If economic trends continue as they are at present, there might be a considerable influx of homeless men to the Bowery.

At present there are more lodging-house beds than needed to serve the homeless population. Nearly all are located on or near the Bowery, and their accommodations are fairly uniformly unpleasant. If the Bowery population increases over the next few years, however, even these minimal quarters will be insufficient. Moreover, if the lodging houses should fall into the hands of building speculators, the homeless men could be quite literally homeless.

The Annual Report of Men's Shelter, January 22, 1968, supplies plentiful data on who the homeless men are. Slightly more than half are between 40 and 59 years of age. The only change in age distribution from 1963 to 1968 indicates a slight increase in the numbers of younger men (20 to 29) frequenting the Bowery, a depressing sign. Almost 90 percent are or were unskilled or semi-skilled workers. The men were found to have had a history of irregular job patterns at unskilled or semi-skilled levels. Education data correlates with these facts. Fifty percent of the men completed only one to three years of high school, often less. Slightly over a quarter of the men studied were married; fifty-six percent were single, and the remainder were widowed or divorced. Furthermore, over half had no contact or very little contact with their families. The composite picture is of a group very much cut off from the ordinary ties of family, friends, or society, with little educational or professional resources, little or no money, and the victims of psychological illness and/or alcoholism. It is very much a

vicious cycle, one of the most difficult social or medical problems to treat.

The range of services offered by the Bureau of Shelter Services or the City's Department of Social Services is designed to correspond to the varied range of responsiveness to treatment of the group of 5,000 or so homeless men. While a certain portion of the population can only benefit from food and shelter, others have varying degrees of capacity for improvement, and still others can be rehabilitated and return to "normal" life in society. Of course there is a difficulty in knowing the potential of each case. Some of the "hopeless" cases might indeed respond to treatment were it available in the type of residential therapeutic environment that would be ideal for their problem and which is currently unavailable. Treatment is not so much inadequate as it is intermittent and episodic. A man may benefit from treatment at any one of the various facilities operated by the city or private groups, but when he returns to the Bowery atmosphere he may find it overpowering.

The Bureau of Shelter Services is composed of several component units, each of which supplies services to the homeless; they inevitably overlap. The Shelter Care Center for Men is the central reception and intake center for all homeless men seeking assistance. The Shelter provides food and lodging for short periods, and refers clients to specialized and appropriate services.

Camp Le Guardia is a residential center outside the city and provides care primarily for elderly clients and men who simply are not up to city life on the Bowery any more. At the moment Camp Le Guardia is being enlarged to accommodate 1,500 rather than 1,000 patients. Men can avail themselves of medical and related services, and generally seek respite from the harshness of their lives for as long as they choose, but Camp Le Guardia does not engage in intensive rehabilitative work.

The Shelter Care Treatment Center (formerly Operation Bowery) determines potentiality for treatment, provides ambulatory care and vocational and other rehabilitative services, and makes referrals to appropriate services and does follow-ups. The Shelter Care Center for Women (presently in the Pioneer Hotel but soon to move to improved quarters) provides basic care and referral for treatment services.

The Manhattan Bowery Project (presently in its third year of operation) is a private institution supported by public funds, and working closely with the Bureau of Shelter Services. Its primary aim is to offer medical aid and referral services to aftercare agencies to alcoholics whom its rescue teams bring in. According to Project records, 70 percent of the men on the street will accept some form of help, and 60 percent of those go through the course of detoxification and will then accept referral to other institutions. The Manhattan Bowery Project has not only demonstrated that men on the Bowery are more responsive to help than was commonly realized, but has provided an effective and centralized means of matching these men with institutions providing the proper care.

Although the City evidently provides a great many services to the homeless population, still more is needed, and more must be forthcoming if the men are to be salvaged from their present life, and if the Lower East Side is envisaged as a pleasant future residential area.

A possible approach advocated by some workers in the field of services to the homeless is the house alcoholics in a residential setting, part of a hospitable therapeutic community, rather than the distasteful commercial lodging houses now available. Such an environment, providing not only basic services but psychiatric counseling, vocational training, and other rehabilitative services in an intensive way, would accomplish more than the existing system. Such a therapeutic community could be on the Bowery or elsewhere, out of the city, but in any case would hopefully offer an environment strong enough to counteract the negative force of street life.

The halfway-house has also been suggested for the homeless. Under this arrangement a man could go to a job during the day and return to the halfway-house at night. This service might be combined with a workshop providing treatment and/or training in manual skills.

Some kind of small scale medical facilities are necessary for the treatment of the many related medical problems which afflict alcoholics. These could function in storefronts. They could also be included within a more broadly functioning medical facility such as the Gouverneur Health Services Program, or any of the hospitals serving the Lower East Side.

More funds for detoxification centers such as that run by the Manhattan Bowery Project would be helpful, as well as additional funds for the Project itself, so that it could expand its services. A crucial aspect of detoxification and rehabilitation is finding the man when they are young, before they have become permanent "fixturs" in the Bowery scene. Expansion of the present program could implement this aim.

Drug Addiction

Drug addiction is undoubtedly the most dangerous health condition on the Lower East Side. Not only does it cause personal tragedy, but it destroys the fabric of family life and of the neighborhood. If, from the complex web that makes up community life in the area one could isolate a critical element that would most remove it, it would be relief from the menace of the drug culture. Compared to the efforts that are needed to redirect the addicts themselves and restore their families and community, the resources offered here seem hopelessly inadequate.

Accurate statistical data on the incidence of drug addiction on the Lower East Side is extremely difficult to obtain, though there is no doubt that it is one of the city's most afflicted areas. The association between chronic poverty and high addiction rates can be illustrated. In January, 1968, alone, the three precincts covering the Addiction Service Agency's Lower Manhattan area, the Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth, listed 114 narcotics complaints. Of these, 80 originated in the Ninth Precinct, covering the poverty-stricken area east of Tompkins Square Park. That was the third highest figure for a single precinct in New York City. Two Harlem precincts were the only ones reporting higher figures. Of course the number of addicts indicated by official complaints are only a very small part of the total.

In 1969, Dr. Efram Ramirez, former Commissioner of Addiction Services, estimated that there were at least 6,000 heroin users on the Lower East Side. This estimate was derived in part from the City Department of Health's Narcotics

Registrar, which, according to workers in the field, lists only about half of the City's addicts. The total clinical estimate of heroin and other hard drug users in the area could go as high as 10,000 or 12,000 and is increasing.

The most extensive addiction services currently available to the Lower East Side are offered by Beth Israel's Morris Bernstein Institute, 307 Second Avenue, the largest non-government hospital in the country dealing with addiction. Bernstein contains 386 beds, most of these being used in the detoxification process. The three addiction programs provided are Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT), Drug Addiction Service (DAS), and Phoenix House. MMT is a three-phase operation providing a maximum of ambulatory and out-patient care. About 675 patients participated during 1968. More than 400, however, are still waiting to enter the program. The Drug Addiction Service, a three-week withdrawal program, cared for 9,118 patients in 1968; 969 are on the waiting list. Bernstein is also the site of Phoenix House, a long-term assistance and therapeutic program for 38 patients. Part of the City's Human Resources Administration, Phoenix House functions as an induction center for patients entering the Addiction Services Agency's city-wide rehabilitation program. Patients participate in orientation and motivation sessions, perhaps for up to three months, after which those who are considered "ready" proceed to one of Phoenix House's therapeutic residential facilities in other parts of the city.

Odyssey House, on East 6th Street, is a residence differing from most others in that it will admit any addict who appears for treatment. Patients undergo an orientation program, followed by intensive and highly-organized programs of group therapy for about 18 months, at which time they are expected to be able to resume life on the outside.

Daytop Village-Span, at 176 Chrystie Street, is a nine-to-live day care center, handling about 30 clients a day. Of these, almost half are addicts who come regularly for three to four months, for group sessions, seminars, and the like, and then move on to one of Daytop's residence centers for further treatment.

The Lower East Side Information and Service Center for Narcotics Addiction, 165 East Broadway, provides diagnosis and treatment without charge, to patients mostly from the Avenue C and D areas.

Horizon Project is the Addiction Services Agency's most recent addition to the range of services on the Lower East Side. Started in 1969 with a five-year National Institute of Mental Health grant, Horizon Project has a broad program of treatment and prevention. Eighty-five patients live in its therapeutic residence on East 4th Street, and many more visit the day-care center at 71 Eldridge Street. Horizon Project also now runs the Addiction Services Agency's Youth Center at 84 Eldridge Street. Through teacher training and its Youth Dynamics Program the project attempts to reach young people in the verge of addiction, or who might be tempted by drugs. By June, 1971, Horizon plans to open five more treatment centers, possibly one as a re-entry center (for patients ready to return to the community on their own), three day-care centers, and three youth centers.

The allocation for addiction services in the City's budget is relatively low compared to the scope and seriousness of the problem. The existing programs are effective, but reach only

a small percentage of those needing help. With drug addiction coming to be recognized as an expression of social and psychological difficulties rather than as a legal problem, many more treatment centers and effective ways of stopping addiction are needed in the area. Whereas community participation is an important factor in all health services, in the realm of addiction it is especially vital. It has been found that when a community actively engages in raising funds, providing housing and equipment, and staffing for treatment centers, their effectiveness is significantly enhanced.

It is widely recognized that the conditions of poverty contribute much to addiction; young people with desperate living conditions and no prospects for an improved future are very likely to turn to drugs. This is more true than ever now that drugs are so readily available in high schools and even junior high schools. But since many middle-class youngsters have lately been found to be addicted, obviously not poverty alone, but a home environment lacking parental concern--no matter what the level of physical comfort--is a major factor. Some form of massive education program of parents, as well as their children, should be undertaken to demonstrate the importance of the family to the potential drug-user.

There has been much controversy about the use of methadone to combat addiction. While methadone, which is now available at several centers, the Bernstein Institute among them, is socially useful since it helps curb addicts' criminal tendencies by relieving them of the need to steal, it does not deal with the basic psychological causes of their addiction, and in fact only substitutes addiction to a less dangerous drug. (Recently the harmlessness of methadone has itself come into question.) It seems reasonable that whatever method has been found to work, whether it be methadone or group therapy or a combination of these, should be continued. Nevertheless the partial success of these methods should not blind the city as a whole to the fact that addiction can be stopped only by remedying the deprivations in the lives of the addicts, which means not only attention to the physical aspects of the community but also an attempt to re-educate and change the values and attitudes of its residents. One way to do this is, in any form of environmental change, to allow community members to function as active agents of improvement rather than as passive victims of bureaucratic decisions.

Lead Poisoning

Up until World War II the use of paint with a high proportion of lead was legal. As a result, many tenements still have layers of leaded paint beneath the more recent coats. Lead poisoning (plumbism) is most common among undernourished children living in dilapidated apartments who eat bits of paint and plaster that fall from walls and ceilings. In advanced stages plumbism destroys nerve cells, causing permanent brain damage and sometimes death. About sixty percent of the Lower East Side's dwelling units may harbor leaded paint. Needless to say, lead poisoning is prevalent on the Lower East Side.

Since the City Health Department began testing blood specimen on all suspected cases the number of reported cases in the city has soared from 80 in 1954 to 725 in 1968. During the same period the fatalities among identified cases declined from 15 percent (12 deaths) to

less than one percent 15 deaths. The 727 cases in 1969 were the highest recorded in the city's history, but the two deaths were the fewest in the last ten years. During the first four months of this year 260 cases were reported, more than for any other comparable period.

Past preventive programs on the Lower East Side have not been effective, according to one health administrator, because of a lack of both enthusiasm and funds. Community health groups such as the NENA Health Council and the Lower East Side Neighborhood Health Council-South have continually tried to make testing for lead poisoning a standard part of basic health screening for all children. Little headway has been made because the standard proven method of testing is blood testing. Officials contend that blood testing is too complicated, lengthy, and expensive to do on a wide scale.

During the last few years there has been an increased awareness among community leaders of the need to combat lead poisoning, and considerable efforts have been made to inform parents of its dangers. The addition of \$150,000 in Health Department funds to the drive against lead poisoning will reportedly enable the Department to identify about 2,500 more cases a year. However, these approaches--keeping children from eating paint, and identifying cases--are not nearly enough. Under the Health Code a landlord can be required to remove any paint that contains more than one percent of lead. An amendment calls for sheathing walls with wallboard. Enforcement of this law is difficult and the city has already been attacked by various groups for not taking a strong enough stand. Obviously this is the key to avoiding lead poisoning--not having the lead accessible.

OBSTACLES TO GOOD HEALTH CARE

Inaccessibility

Even if the Lower East Side were adequately served by rapid transit and bus lines, large sections of the community would still be far from health services. With the exception of the small and unique North East Neighborhood Association (NENA) Health Center and a few nursing homes, there are neither adult medical facilities nor in-patient facilities in the heart of the area. All facilities, such as they are, are at the outer edges of the Lower East Side. It is not the major facilities for serious illness or long-term care, such as Bellevue or Gouverneur Hospitals, that are deficient on the Lower East Side. Rather it is the smaller, neighborhood-based service that can provide comprehensive out-patient care and practice preventive medicine that is needed.

Accessibility is of great importance, not only for the obvious reason of convenience, but because of the psychological advantages to the patient. Physical proximity encourages the health care consumer's involvement in the planning and provision of health and medical services. If he has a sense of belonging and participation he is more inclined to use its services when he needs them, rather than postponing visits until dire emergency. Such a sense of identification also helps counteract the cultural chasm between middle-class professional and low-income patient which can act as a de-

terrent to preventive medicine, especially where there is a language barrier in the target area.

Cost

If the expense of medical care is a deterrent to the population at large, it is an insurmountable barrier for poor people. Programs like Medicaid and Medicare barely begin to ease the burden. Recent budget cuts are emasculating these programs. More than half of those persons originally covered by Medicaid are now ineligible.

Not only is the actual dollars-and-cents expense of health care a problem, but financing policies also deter prospective patients. Despite recommendations since 1952 for universal prepayment plans, the fee-for-service pattern still prevails. This method encourages postponing health care, where the patient waits until he develops a health problem or even a medical crisis before seeking attention, rather than the kind of preventive medicine that would offset illness by a plan of regular checkups and examinations. Routine physical checkups are not covered by existing insurance plans such as Blue Cross or by Medicare.

For the households earning less than \$6,000 a year who comprise about three-quarters of the Lower East Side's population, private fee-for-service health care is a luxury. An estimated 47 percent of all Lower East Side residents, about 89,000 people, have no health insurance at all and are not eligible for either Medicaid or Medicare. The table below shows the extent to which Lower East Side residents can count on non-personal payments to cover their medical expenses.

TABLE 22

Extent of Medical Care Payment Coverage, 1969

	Number of Persons	% of Total Population
Medicare*	21,000	1.1
Medicaid*	27,000	4.1
Adequate Private Insurance	36,000	14.0
Minimal Private Insurance	17,000	4.1
Some Coverage	101,000	15.2
No Coverage	89,000	46.1
Total	190,000	100.0

*Elderly people on welfare or receiving both Medicare and Medicaid benefits. These estimates are for non-overlapping categories with the dominant program selected.

Source: Various reports and community health estimates.

The large uncovered group, almost 47 percent of the population, is composed of 150,000 families too young to be covered by Medicare, above the welfare level and thus ineligible for Medicaid, yet not able to obtain private insurance.

Delivery

The adequate delivery of health services in the Lower East Side is hampered by two factors in particular: the organization of existing services and a shortage of medical professionals.

In the major health institutions, the larger clinics and hospitals, excessive waiting time, fragmentation of services, and a lack of coordination between the health provider and agencies such as the Department of Social Services, all seriously detract from the quality of health care. The situation confronting an average Lower East Side prospective clinic user--not to mention an old person or a Spanish or Chinese speaking person--is neither encouraging nor inviting. In fact it virtually assaults his human dignity, a burden that someone in poor health is less equipped to deal with than anyone else. In an attempt to offset these deficiencies the HENA Health Center and, to a lesser extent, Gouverneur Health Services Program, have adopted the team method for a comprehensive, coordinated attack on health problems and the sociological and psychological pathologies that aggravate or even cause them.

It is also important to distinguish between the larger institution aiming primarily at excellence in the teaching and research fields, and the smaller, community-based facility, oriented mainly toward patient care. It has been found that in the large teaching hospitals, services for patients with common health problems are often sacrificed in favor of exotic research and specialized study.

The establishment of satellite clinics and family health centers is all the more important on the Lower East Side because of the shortage of physicians willing to care for poorer patients. Several years ago Mobilization for Youth compiled a list of Lower East Side doctors and dentists willing to take Medicaid patients. At that time they found only thirty-six physicians and forty-seven dentists. According to health specialists at Gouverneur, the exodus of doctors from the Lower East Side has increased significantly during the past few years.

The shortage of doctors means that existing facilities are overloaded. Furthermore, patients who cannot obtain home care are added to the waiting lines in the clinics, while those who do get sick have to spend a longer time in the hospital because they are sicker when finally admitted.

EXISTING FACILITIES & SERVICES

BELEVUE HOSPITAL CENTER

Between one-third and one-half of Bellevue's out-patients live south of 14th Street, although the hospital is more than a mile from the Lower East Side. A study conducted several years ago showed that half of Bellevue's out-patients were Puerto Rican and another 15 percent Negro. Seventy percent of Bellevue's patients come from its ambulance district, which runs from Houston to 42nd Streets. The psychiatric and tuberculosis units serve the entire borough.

Like most of the municipal hospitals, Bellevue (located at 31st Street and First Avenue) has undergone a drop in utilization which health officials attribute for the most part to the establishment of Medicaid. As the table on activity at Bellevue shows, the only general care service that showed an increase in use from 1967 to 1968 was the emergency room--the most "involuntary" service of a hospital. Emergency visits increased from 73,000 in 1967 to 76,000 in 1968. At the same time the number of general care clinic visits decreased by 51,500 to 233,000, an 18.1 percent contraction. The number of in-patients also decreased by 14.7 percent. The fact that the already overcrowded voluntary hospitals did not show a comparable increase since the passage of Medicaid indicates that people who cannot afford to pay for medical care wait until they are seriously ill before seeking help in the emergency room.

TABLE 23

Bellevue Hospital Center
General Care Activity, 1967-1968

	1967	1968	Percent Change
Bed Complement*	1,489	1,142	-23.3
Average Daily Census	932	844	-9.4
Discharges	21,800	19,000	-12.8
In-Patients	22,600	19,276	-14.7
Clinic Visits	284,500	233,000	-18.1
Emergency Visits	73,000	76,000	+4.1
Patient days	340,500	309,000	-9.3

*Maximum number of beds available at any given time.

Source: Department of Hospitals

The drop-off in the psychiatric department was almost as severe--8.9 percent fewer in-patients and 7.3 percent fewer clinic visits.

Although most residents of the northern part of the Lower East Side know about Bellevue, attitudes towards the institution are generally unfavorable. In his 1966 study of health services in Cooper Square, Walter Thabit found that Bellevue was the facility that most of the respondents were familiar with, had attended during the past year, but would not go to if they had any choice. The principal objections to the hospital were those usually associated with "clinic medicine": long waiting periods and the generally insensitive attitude of the staff. Medical care, as in most municipal hospitals, is impersonal, highly fragmented, and episodic. This discontinuity is likely to go on and probably deepen as the people ineligible for Medicaid since the July, 1969, cut-back visit Bellevue clinics even less frequently.

Criticism has also been leveled at Bellevue's psychiatric unit, which is in fact not much more than a way-station between the street and the state hospital. Many of the patients are brought in by the police, given a perfunctory diagnostic interview and perhaps a dose of tranquilizers. The 582-bed unit is the most crowded in the entire hospital center. The recent figures confirm the essentially transient nature of its treatment; the 1968 occupancy rate was 129 percent with a total of 13,300 patients, each spending about two weeks there. A community mental health center, one of five such facilities in the current capital budget, is being built at the Center. (Another mental health center will be part of New Gouverneur Hospital.)

Staffed by New York University Medical Center under the affiliation plan, Bellevue is part of a loosely organized conglomerate that includes the NYU School of Medicine, Bellevue Nursing School (now affiliated with Hunter College), the Institute for Rehabilitation Medicine, St. Vincent's Hospital in Greenwich Village, New York Intirmary and Goldwater Hospital, another municipal facility on Welfare Island.

To date, NYU-Bellevue's direct involvement with the Lower East Side community has been limited to an ill-fated attempt to help the North East Neighborhood Association plan, the NENA clinic. Apparently, NYU-Bellevue abandoned the project over the issue of including consumers of health services at the policy-making level.

BETH ISRAEL MEDICAL CENTER

While the municipal hospitals like Bellevue experienced a decrease in activity during 1968, Beth Israel (Suyvesant Square and East 16th Street), the largest voluntary hospital serving the Lower East Side, increased its services. Emergency visits, as the table below shows, jumped almost 10 percent to 57,230; out-patient visits expanded by 4.6 percent to 361,989; and 7 percent more patient days were provided for almost 6 percent more in-patients. These figures include, but do not isolate, a 15 percent decrease in total out-patient visits to the Gouverneur Health Services Program. Beth Israel's affiliate located in the heart of the Lower East Side. (The contraction at Gouverneur is also attributed to the Medicaid cut-back.)

Out-patient services at Beth Israel Hospital, largest of the medical center's divisions, are offered through the Charles M. Silver clinic. Out-patient activity reached an all-time high of 88,213 visits during 1968, an average of

65.4 visits per patient. Most of the patients live south of 14th Street; the majority are Puerto Rican. Since the Medicaid cut-back, fee schedules have been restructured and most of the patients pay \$1.00. Clinic services are organized into four comprehensive care units with each patient assigned to a personal physician.

Beth Israel Hospital contains 628 beds all located in private, 2-bed and 4-bed rooms. In January, 1968, the occupancy rate ranged from 78.7 in pediatrics to 95.6 in the medical-surgical department, higher than the occupancy rates at Bellevue Hospital Center.

Although referrals from Gouverneur needing in-patient care should, according to contract, be admitted automatically to Beth Israel, local physicians have complained that hospital residents do selective screening and subject the medically indigent to second-class accommodations. Whether the quality of medical care is also second-class is worth some study.

TABLE 24

Beth Israel Medical Center
General Care Activity, 1967-1968

	1967	1968	Percent Change
Bed Complement	920	936	+17.4
In-Patient Admissions	23,258	24,617	+5.8
Patient days	308,004	329,512	+7.0
Out-Patient Visits	346,138	361,989	+4.6
Emergency Visits	52,073	57,230	+9.9

Source: Beth Israel Medical Center

Beth Israel's third component is the Morris Bernstein Institute (formerly Manhattan General Hospital), specializing in narcotics addiction, and discussed above.

A partial hospitalization psychiatric care program at Beth Israel includes day and night care and consultation. Soon, through changes in contractual agreements, expanded consultation, integrated care and emergency service will be made available to adolescents. Preliminary steps have also been taken toward designing a comprehensive program for alcoholics.

Beth Israel has conducted admirable education programs for the community: job training for staff, as well as health fairs, forums, and conferences run in conjunction with community organizations and aimed at informing the public. Nevertheless, though the Beth Israel Center has such a large role in health care on the Lower East Side, it has never encouraged the local health care consumer to have any say in the formulation of policy or practices, even though its subsidiary Gouverneur and Judson programs are financed with public funds.

TABLE 25

Gouverneur Health Services Program
General Care Activity, 1967-1968

	1967	1968	Percent Change
New Patients Registered	8,232	4,834	-41.3
Physician Visits	165,020	137,146	-16.9
Dental Visits	27,287	25,328	-7.2
Emergency Visits	22,495	20,151	-10.4
Total Registered	68,251	73,085	+7.1
Total Visits	214,802	182,625	-15.0
Visits per Patient	3.2	2.5	-0.7

Source: Gouverneur Health Services Program

The Gouverneur operation, located at 400 Ave. and Gouverneur St., is a Federally-aided municipal health program affiliated with Beth Israel Medical Center, that provides outpatient and emergency medical care for persons living in the area bounded by the East River, East 3rd Street, the Bowery, Houston Street, and the Hudson River. More than 70,000 of the 160,000 residents of this area are registered at Gouverneur and its satellite, the Judson Health Center. The patients at Gouverneur are for the most part poor, 90 percent of them were eligible for Medicaid of the program's out-of-pocket annual income \$5,300 or less for a family of 4). About a third of those living in the service area are Puerto Rican and more than one-half of the non-white population is of Chinese origin.

The range and organization of Gouverneur's health care goes far beyond those usually found in a medical center serving the poor. Gouverneur provides comprehensive, family-oriented health services including preventive, diagnostic and curative services, and varied community-oriented educational and organizational activities. The basic medical program is organized into family health teams composed of internists, pediatricians, registered nurses, social workers, health aides, social health technicians, a communications coordinator and clerical staff. Night clinics are open four evenings a week from 6 to 9 p.m. at Gouverneur, less often at the smaller Judson center.

Gouverneur's Department of Behavioral Sciences combines the functions of a department of psychiatry with that of social service. A team approach has been implemented in providing psychiatric services. The Cognitive Training and Development Department seeks to retrain children with so-called "behavior problems" that often stem from disorganized social and family backgrounds. Gouverneur also maintains a Mobile Units Unit funded by the Community Mental Health Board and Beth Israel Medical Center.

The remarkable drop-off in activity at Gouverneur from 1967 to 1968 shown on the accompanying table is an excellent example of the deleterious effect Medicaid has had on health services, to the poor especially. Between 1967 and 1968 there was a 15 percent decrease in visits to Gouverneur. It can be expected that a further drop will be recorded for 1969 as a result of the lower eligibility levels that went into effect last June 1. Whereas all those eligible were previously treated without charge at Gouverneur, the unit is now faced with four different situations--Medicaid only, Medicaid only, Medicaid and Medicare, and no coverage.

Originally all persons, with few exceptions, living in public housing were eligible to receive Medicaid. However, the June cutback eliminated more than half of the previously covered patients. Realizing the problem, Gouverneur established a sliding pay scale. All public housing residents may still pay \$1.00 per visit. Most employed non-welfare race plants between the age of 18 and 65, who were so dropped from Medicaid, are also being charged \$1.00. A thorough regulations require Gouverneur to bill each non-race plant for \$25.50, the bills are later adjusted. The paperwork involved in this process is considerable and about a dozen clerical employees had to be added to the staff just to handle the extra work.

In general, although Gouverneur is a subsidiary of Beth Israel, community relations here have been more satisfactory than with the parent. With the help of the Office of Economic Opportunity which provides a portion of the funds for Gouverneur, a framework was established within which community people could participate in its operation. Out of this grew the Lower East Side Neighborhood Health Council - South. After a three-year struggle to gain the recognition of the Gouverneur-Beth Israel administration, the city, and OEO, the Council has managed to get a small staff and its own representative at Gouverneur.

Part of the Council's function has been evaluation of Gouverneur's services. So far, the results of an ongoing investigation show that patients are largely satisfied with services at the unit. The complaints that have been received concern poor attitudes of professional as well as non-professional staff; long waiting periods before scheduled appointments; need to offer a greater range of services; and need to reach out health services to Eldridge Street area, Chinatown, and the Suffolk-Pitt Streets area.

Even though a New Gouverneur Hospital is scheduled to be finished in June, 1971, it will provide mainly for acute and extended in-patient care, so that the local resident in need of short-term hospital care will be in the same predicament as at present. Furthermore, despite recent extensive renovation at the present Gouverneur facility, there does not seem to be any plan for continued utilization of the building. In a time when health care services are insufficient it would be short-sighted to overlook the old building, its facilities, and associations for the residents, simply because a new hospital will be available.

Judson, the Spring Street satellite of the Gouverneur program, provides largely the same kind of essential services on a smaller scale to a population living as far west as Washington Street and east to about Ludlow Street. Probably because a much smaller percentage of the patients were receiving Medicaid originally, Judson experienced a substantial increase in activity. During the first nine months of

1969 the number of Medicaid registrations at Judson decreased by close to 50 percent while at Gouverneur they increased by more than 50 percent. Total visits increased 12.6 percent. This would appear to indicate that the population served by Judson is probably better able to meet its medical expenses and less affected by reductions in Medicaid.

NEW YORK INFIRMARY

New York Infirmary, a voluntary hospital at Stuyvesant Square and East 15th Street, has a teaching affiliation with New York University Medical Center. About 25 percent of New York Infirmary's in-patients and half of its out-patients are Lower East Side residents. The hospital's out-patient clinics offer a variety of services including ambulatory psychiatric care.

During the first eleven months of 1969, out-patient visits increased just one percent over the same period in 1968. Admissions increased 4.6 percent and emergency visits went up 12.6 percent. This is in keeping with trends at the other voluntary hospitals.

Fees are generally more than most Lower East Side residents can directly afford. The out-patient clinic charges seven or eight dollars for a basic visit. Laboratory fees are extra. Emergency room visits are ten dollars. Patients not covered by Medicare or Medicaid are unable to pay most with a Social Services Investigator who determines if they are eligible for any of the existing medical assistance programs.

The hospital has a complement of 265 beds and no expansion in patient facilities is contemplated.

NORTH EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (NENA) HEALTH CENTER

Along with Gouverneur, NENA is one of the unique health facilities on the Lower East Side. It is a comprehensive ambulatory operation and has been handling about 180 visits a day since it opened in August, 1969, in a renovated building on East 3rd Street near Avenue C. A strong emphasis is placed on preventive medicine.

Planned and executed by a coalition of community organizations, the NENA Center is one of four such centers in the country funded by the Public Health Service that are completely community controlled. Although NENA's doctors have admitting privileges at New York Infirmary, the health center is not controlled by that or any other hospital. Personnel are interviewed and screened by the NENA Health Council and, as a result, NENA has managed to achieve a well-integrated staff on both professional and non-professional levels.

The center has a staff of about sixty and is open from 9 to 5, five days a week. Plans to build a new building to house an expanded operation have been hindered by a reduction in funds available through the Comprehensive Health Planning Act. The center is now operating with a five-year stimulatory grant to pay for operating expenses.

STUYVESANT POLYCLINIC

Polyclinic (Second Avenue at East 9th Street), which is staffed by volunteers, provides only out-patient services in twenty-four departments. The clinic handles up to 25,000 visits

a year, the majority of them for a period from the immediate area. An estimated 75 percent of the out-patients live south of 14th Street. Any indigent person is accepted for care at Stuyvesant. The fees are minimal. There are no emergency services, but Polyclinic has an arrangement with Beth Israel.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

The Lower East Side Health Center, whose district office is on East 25th Street, runs three of the five local child health stations--Maddison Street (Smith Houses), Avenue D (Lillian Wald Houses) and Delancey Street (Baruch Houses). (Two other stations at Bellevue Hospital and East 3rd Street [First Houses] are directly administered by Bellevue Hospital.)

The child health stations provide free care for well babies. If a persistent health problem is noticed, the child is referred to a hospital clinic, which usually means an inconvenient wait in a noisy waiting-room. Even though these stations do not maximize the use of their facilities, their small scale and quiet atmosphere respond to a definite need for a very localized kind of child health care.

There has been a moderate decline in use of the city health stations. About 19,000 visits were made in 1967 and slightly more than 18,000 during 1968. Of those registered at the health stations, 852, or 15 percent, were less than a year old; 4,791 were pre-school youngsters between the ages of one and five.

The Lower East Side Health Center is also responsible for health services in all the schools, public and parochial, within its district. Dental clinics located in five separate public schools, P.S. 1, 34, 63, 140 and 188, service only public school enrollees. (Other dental clinics are available at the Health Center itself, the Gouverneur Health Services and Beth Israel Medical Center.) The basic problem with the school program is a shortage of nurses and the limits of their services. The nurses in the program are restricted to routine examinations, weight checks and eye tests. Aside from having insufficient time to deal with more serious health problems, the school care system tends to divorce the child's problems from the context of family life and home conditions.

In addition to the Department of Health's child care stations, pre-natal, pediatric and family planning clinics are available at four area hospitals--Bellevue, Beth Israel, Columbus, and New York Infirmary. At three of those hospitals visits dropped off twenty percent from 1967 to 1968. During the same period the birth rate at the same hospitals increased by almost five percent.

As the total number of clinic visits decreased, the statisticians at the Gouverneur Health Services Unit noticed that the parents who did bring their children were missing fewer appointments. Gouverneur's experience is mentioned because it belies the contention of some observers that poor people often neglect their children's health. If poorer children are less healthy than the middle-class peers, it is probably because of inadequate nutrition, inadequate housing and inadequate health facilities. The parents, according to a Gouverneur report, tend to be more concerned about the health of their children than about their own health. The high walk-in rate in pediatrics reflects this parental concern.

Spec of pediatric services are also provided

at Bath Free Medical Center through the SFP program (infant, pre-school, school-age, youth). Enrollments increased from 1,000 in 1967 to 3,200 in 1968. The program will eventually provide medical and dental care, psychological and psychiatric services for 8,000 youngsters.

A new program at Gouverneur in conjunction with Operation Headstart screens youngsters attending the pre-school centers. Complete physical examinations are now available. According to a spokesman, checkups at the centers with follow-ups where necessary at Gouverneur have enabled the health unit to triple the volume of treatment previously offered. Headstart funds pay for a pediatrician, public health nurse and public health technician.

A PROGRAM FOR HEALTH CARE

GOALS FOR HEALTH CARE

Good health signifies more than the absence of disease. The maintenance of good health requires the reorganization of health programs for an assault on the social and environmental pathologies that nurture physiological infirmities.

The following general goals are geared toward filling the serious gaps in the Lower East Side's health services by overcoming the obstacles indicated earlier. To a great extent their realization depends on a change in attitude on the part of health providers and administrators and patients alike.

Meeting the Lower East Side's health service goals will not require expensive new facilities nor large amounts of land. The major installations for a system of comprehensive health care already exist in Bellevue and Bath Israel Hospital Centers and the soon-to-be-completed Gouverneur Hospital. What is desperately needed is a reorganization of services at these institutions so that they are closely related to the other parts of the system: the smaller family health centers, nursing homes and extended care facilities that would provide daily basic health services to residents. This network of local facilities could be accommodated in smaller new buildings, remodeled quarters or rented space in new housing or buildings used for other public services.

More than most similar neighborhoods the Lower East Side has the basic features, although several are embryonic, of a comprehensive health care system. Two major teaching hospitals with a full range of medical-surgical services--Bath Israel and Bellevue--are nearby and already have strong ties to the neighborhood and its local health services. These hospitals should be used for people who are acutely ill or require extended, intensive care. At the next level in the community is the new Gouverneur Hospital

which should be devoted to patients who are moderately ill and need general medical-surgical care. A third level would consist of community nursing homes and extended care facilities for people who do not need intensive medical attention. The last link would be the local facilities offering comprehensive out-patient care and stressing preventive medicine. At this important level the Lower East Side already has two exemplars--the NEMA Health Center and the Gouverneur Health Services Program--that should serve as models for additional community health centers. The task ahead is to firmly establish all parts of the health care system and get them working together. Existing out-patient facilities should be expanded and new facilities created to allow for six visits per person annually, instead of the present two or three. The expansion should include dental, psychiatric, narcotic, and alcoholic services to meet the special needs of the community. All out-patient services should be organized as team operations, with designated physicians responsible to each family, that will provide a coordinated preventive, therapeutic, and educational approach to health. This form of organization should include periodic examinations and tests as preventive measures and systematic follow-ups of patients referred to allied in-patient facilities.

All facilities should provide a framework for community participation in the formulation of operating, personnel, and fee policies, and in the evaluation of existing services and the initiation of new and needed services. Health administrators must at last recognize that the community itself is an excellent judge of what its health service requirements are. In line with more consideration of the community as an active participant in health matters, the hours of out-patient facilities should be adjusted to meet the needs of all groups in the community. (For example, Sunday hours at clinics serving the orthodox Jewish population that will not visit on Saturday, evening hours for working men, and so forth.) The setting for health care should preserve human dignity and privacy, meaning that long waits, fragmented and aloof treatment and other de-humanizing features must be eliminated.

Moreover, all health facilities should include a job training component to relieve the professional staff of some of its non-medical duties, increase employment opportunities in general, provide training for health careers, and enhance the community's involvement in the provision of health services. The bill before the State Legislature that would permit accredited hospitals to train physician's assistants and other intermediate health workers is an important step in this direction.

Coordinated interagency programs should be created to combat environmental threats to health such as rats, lead poisoning, and poor heat, through education and preventive measures.

To improve the poor accessibility problem, additional special transportation to health facilities might be established, along the lines of Gouverneur's Jitney service, a regularly scheduled microbus making specific stops to pick up patients. More important, new facilities must be located to fill geographic gaps in the health care pattern, particularly above Houston Street and in the Chinatown area. Besides giving residents in those areas nearby health services, this would relieve the patient load and thus increase the quality of services at existing clinics.

The problem of health services for the aged must be approached with particular care. First, hospitals must establish geriatric clinics equipped to deal with the unique problems of elderly people. Administrative procedures should be devised to make the experiences of visiting the clinic easier and more encouraging to old people. For example, they need specific appointments with short waiting periods, rather than having to sit in a noisy, crowded clinic waiting room. Geriatric clinics should coordinate their activities with the Department of Social Services to eliminate double processing for medical supplies and fees. Humane treatment of each clinic visitor as a person with individual problems, which should be a staple element of all health care, must be especially true in the care of older people.

If better health services are to be provided on the Lower East Side, more medical personnel will have to be attracted to the area. In an era of shortages among professionals and an increasingly fragmented and complex medical technology, the most satisfactory solution may well be to encourage group practices. Such units of practitioners will also be receptive forms for comprehensive, pre-paid health insurance plans.

No amount of administrative reorganization nor encouragement of community medicine will solve the Lower East Side's health problems if the necessary services cannot be paid for. Despite great difficulties with eligibility levels, financing and delivery, Medicare and Medicaid have set a precedent for national, albeit limited, health insurance coverage and standards of treatment. A comprehensive prepaid health insurance plan, as part of a national or state effort, should be instituted on the Lower East Side. The network of health services noted above, especially the neighborhood health units, would be supported by payments through the insurance plan. Initially Medicare, Medicaid and third-party payments from private insurance plans would buy medical services for the 11 out of 20 residents now enrolled in these plans. Subsequently, the remaining residents who do not have any coverage would be included in the new plan.

PLANNED HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Although bureaucratic machinery moves slowly, plans for several Lower East Side health projects that will help considerably in closing the gaps and meeting the goals described above are already underway. It is assumed that these proposals will proceed as scheduled and, wherever possible, their projected levels of activity have been taken into account in estimating future needs. In some instances, however, the plans should be altered so that the facilities can help fill the most critical deficiencies first. Suggestions for optimum utilization have, therefore, been included.

New Gouverneur Hospital

After continued prodding from the community, political and health figures, Mayor Lindsay stated that the new hospital at Jefferson, Madison, Clinton and Henry Streets will be completed by June, 1971.

The hospital was planned to provide comprehensive in-patient care. Despite assurances from the Department of Hospitals, however, there appears to be an undue overemphasis on extended, acute and long-term care. Presently the occupancy rate of the 2,350 beds in the general medical-surgical departments of the five hospi-

tals is most utilized by residents of the Lower East Side is higher than the occupancy rate for the 1,516 long-term and mental care beds. Nevertheless, plans now call for using 110 of the new hospital's 206 beds for "extended, but not necessarily permanent care". In addition, an unspecified number of beds will be devoted to acute medium and long-term pediatric care.

Gynecetrics and all but the simplest surgical cases will still have to be taken care of at Beth Israel Medical Center. If no beds are available there, patients will be referred to Bellevue as they are at present. Moreover, if Beth Israel's proposed 150-200 bed extended care unit to be built with State Health Department funds is realized soon, there will be even less need for extended care services at Gouverneur. In other words, the average patient requiring a short hospital stay may face the same difficult situation he does now. In light of the goal enunciated above, making Gouverneur a community-type hospital for the moderately ill and general medical-surgical care, the planned distribution and use of bed space and supporting facilities at the new hospital should be reexamined.

The new hospital will incorporate a mental hygiene clinic. It should also include a narcotics program. In general, the new hospital will provide the opportunity, as well as the space, for the desirable reorganization of outpatient services as a team operation. A Department of Social Services office is already included. The integration of this service with the health services should be planned in conjunction with community representatives. It appears that no space has been set aside for vocational training. This function, too, should be planned with the participation of the health care consumers.

It would be easy for the city to neglect its responsibility for planning the hospital and leave the job to Beth Israel Medical Center, which is charged with Gouverneur's operation and administration. Nevertheless, a total of \$20.5 million is budgeted for a facility that should be an important link in downtown Manhattan's health services and its programs and policies ought to reflect the needs of the community. Health care consumers should also be in a position to determine whether they are getting the services they need. Along these lines, the affiliation contract with Beth Israel should establish a formal structure for consumer involvement. The organization, rights and responsibilities of such a consumers' board should be determined now, before the hospital begins operation.

NEHA Health Center

The NEHA Health Council, which now operates an innovative neighborhood health center at East Third Street and Avenue C, is seeking funds to develop a permanent installation in the same vicinity. Plans for the new center have been hindered by a reduction of monies available for operational grants under the Federal Comprehensive Health Planning Act.

The present facility, in operation since August, 1969, can handle an annual load of 8,000 visits. Between 10,000 and 15,000 persons from the area bounded by Houston Street, Avenue A, 14th Street and the East River would be served by the new center. The NEHA center is a team operation emphasizing preventive medicine, and involving community residents at the policy-making level.

Although NENA physicians have admitting privileges at New York Infirmary, the Center is independent of any hospital or medical school. It is this very independence and commitment to a community-minded health care program that make NENA's survival precarious. The medical establishment influencing the distribution of government health funds is not sympathetic to this type of operation.

The NENA precedent can make a substantial contribution to the attainment of the Lower East Side's health service goals. It has provided a neighborhood health center for families in the very depressed area north of Houston Street. It concentrates on the long-range goals of preventive medicine by educating residents about the necessity of regular visits and in methods of combatting environmental menaces such as rats and leaded paint. Aside from these contributions, an expanded NENA center would have the advantage for the city of reducing the burden at other out-patient facilities. Clearly some way must be found to finance its continuation and expansion.

The most feasible method would probably be multiple funding to allow NENA to expand its present operation beyond a five-day, nine to five operation, and also to realize its plans for an enlarged, permanent family health care center. Rather than duplicating services presently offered elsewhere, NENA should have referral privileges to the larger institutions, with results sent back for inclusion in the patients' records. Future plans also include an addiction services and prevention program in conjunction with the Addiction Services Agency, an expanded mental health component (not currently financed by the Public Health Service) and job training.

Chinatown Health Centers

Since immigration barriers were dropped in 1962, Chinatown's population now estimated at 40,000 to 50,000 has been increasing at the rate of 4,000 to 5,000 annually. Because of linguistic, cultural and religious differences, the Chinese are probably the most isolated group on the Lower East Side. Getting the residents to participate in the planning of a health center and then encouraging them to use it is, therefore, all the more difficult. Nevertheless, the very isolation of the community makes it particularly necessary to include consumers from the start in order to insure that the services will meet their needs. The method of delivery must be adjusted to accommodate the large numbers of new immigrants and elderly persons who have difficulty acclimating themselves to an alien environment.

In response to this critical situation there are plans for two out-patient operations to serve Chinatown's burgeoning population. The Gouverneur Health Services program has prepared a proposal to the Office of Economic Opportunity for establishing a satellite center. Also, Beekman-Downtown Hospital, a voluntary hospital at 170 William Street, has been authorized to start a clinic. Support is being sought from several foundations to cover a prospective operating deficit of \$500,000 for five years. Both centers will probably operate out of rented quarters.

Beekman now operates a minibus between Mulberry Street and its main building on a regular five-day a week schedule. The Beekman clinic would initially serve about 10,000 persons with minor problems as well as providing screening. More serious cases would be transported to William Street by the minibus.

the Gouverneur Chinatown Clinic, similar to the Judson Health Center, would service about 25,000 persons. Comprehensive, family-oriented ambulatory care would be available, as well as in-home care for the chronically ill.

It must also be recognized that the overall health situation here, as in the other Lower East Side neighborhoods, is closely related to problems such as poor housing. A broad-based health facility can provide an opportunity to galvanize community support for an attack on other problems that are linked to health services.

MEETING HEALTH NEEDS IN INADEQUATELY SERVICED AREAS

In addition to the services already planned, additional facilities will be needed to provide the standard of medical care that the Lower East Side should be receiving. These are discussed below in terms of out-patient and in-patient care.

Out-Patient Care

The combined existing medical facilities on the Lower East Side are equipped to handle about 453,000 out-patient visits annually. (See Table 26.) By 1975, assuming that a new and expanded NENA Health Center is ready, the combined facilities will still provide only an average of 2.4 visits per person. If the NENA Center is not complete, the rate of visits per person will be 2.2. In order to raise the average number of annual contacts to about six per person including dental care and special services, additional facilities will be needed to handle more than 700,000 additional visits a year, an increase of almost 200 percent. (An average of six visits a year is a reasonable goal, considering that such a large part of the population consists of children and elderly persons, and that many Lower East Side residents require treatment for drug addiction, alcoholism, and psychological disorders.)

TABLE 26

Estimated Out-Patient Visits by
Lower East Side Residents 1967-1968

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Annual Out-Patient Visits</u>
Bellevue Hospital Center	183,500
Beth Israel Medical Center	63,000
Gouverneur Health Services Program	100,000
Stuyvesant Polyclinic	18,750
Judson Health Center	8,700
Columbus Hospital	16,000
NENA Health Center	8,000
Lower East Side Health Center (children's clinics)	54,800
Total	452,750

This does not mean that the existing facilities will have to double in size, although substantial expansion is necessary. It does mean that the available facilities will have to be utilized to the fullest extent possible. In fact, if some of the other goals are attained, such as increased training for health careers and improved transportation and hours of operation, the all-important goal of increasing contact between the patient and the professional health provider will be much more easily reached. Deployment of mobile health units will also help to increase contacts.

Assuming that the Chinatown clinic will be able to handle a portion of the Lower East Side population, and the NEHA Health Center is completed and serving a population of 10,000 to 15,000 persons, at least two good-sized additional out-patient facilities will be needed by 1975. These clinics, which would offer comprehensive, family-oriented out-patient services, should be located northeast of Tompkins Square Park and in the Delancey-Essex Street Area. They should be equipped to handle between 50,000 and 60,000 contacts annually, about the same volume now handled at the Beth Israel Medical Center. These facilities could raise the number of annual medical visits to 600,000 to 700,000. With an increase in para-professional and clerical staff to relieve physicians of some of their less technical and administrative duties, and an accompanying increase in hours of operation to seven days a week, the goal of six visits per person could most likely be met.

Any new facilities should be planned as team operations emphasizing the preventive nature of health care while providing the means to deal swiftly and effectively with periodic health crises.

Some health planners feel that even the Neighborhood Health Center concept is too broad to provide adequate preventive care on a personal basis. They propose an arrangement whereby three or four doctors operating out of a converted apartment, in a housing project perhaps, could handle 8,000 to 10,000 patients. Patients could be screened at this level and then referred to a more centralized unit. Treatment in an out-patient department, which averages \$35 to \$40 per patient visit, could be reduced to \$10 through the form of decentralization. The plan is relatively inexpensive, its facilities could be acquired easily, and it could be implemented fairly rapidly.

TABLE 27

Estimated Emergency Visits
by Lower East Side Residents

Facility	Annual Emergency Visits
Bellevue Hospital Center	40,500
Beth Israel Medical Center	27,000
Columbus Hospital	16,000
Gouverneur Health Services Program	22,500
Total	106,000

In-Patient Care

It appears that the present in-patient facilities, with the addition of the beds in the new Gouverneur Hospital, should be adequate for the immediate future. This assumes, however, that Lower East Side residents will have immediate access to more than a third of the general care beds at the five most utilized hospitals -- Beekman-Downtown, Beth Israel, Columbus, New York Infirmary and Bellevue.

These hospitals can provide 606,000 patient days if beds are occupied 300 days each year. Using the most recent Health Department statistics on discharges and lengths of stay, by 1975 the Lower East Side's population will require about 250,000 patient days annually. This is based on an average stay of 12.6 days with a hospitalization rate of 98 discharges/

1,000 persons. If this goal is met, outpatient visits and bed requirements will be emphasized to prevent overcrowding. If these goals are attained, these rates will, hopefully, be substantially lower.

COMBATING ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS TO HEALTH

Most of the Lower East Side's environmental health problems are related to poor housing. The two most serious threats are probably lead poisoning and rats. The eradication will involve a combination of governmental action, therapeutic and preventive medical action, and public education.

Lead Poisoning

A program aimed at reducing the incidence of lead poisoning must involve a combination of prevention and detection. Enforcement of newly enacted legislation requiring landlords to remove paint containing more than one percent lead, or to sheath those walls, will contribute significantly to the reduction of lead poisoning. But this legislation can be effective only if the buildings where the problem exists can be located and followed up with a strong enforcement program. Also, penalties must be stiff enough to induce the landlords' cooperation.

Therefore, immediately after periodic testing indicates the likelihood of lead poisoning in a child, the city must intervene to order an examination of all apartments in the building where the child lives and send in an emergency education team to warn all parents. If landlords do not act within five days, the city should send in repair crews to cover the wall.

A major education effort must be conducted on the local level in terms that residents can understand. In addition to publicizing symptoms of the disease, parents must be urged to stop their children from nibbling on paint or plaster chips, to seek medical attention immediately if a child has been doing this, and, to clean up fallen pieces of paint and plaster and to cover crumbling walls. The mobile outreach health units would be an excellent medium for disseminating information on lead poisoning.

Local health services should be able to recognize and respond to the problem. Their actions should include:

- Routine inquiries about pica (the abnormal craving for non-food substances) in all young children.
- Re-evaluating at regular intervals children with pica who did not initially demonstrate a toxic blood level in tests.
- Blood testing, wherever feasible, of all children not living in housing projects until other methods for testing for the presence of lead in the body are available.

As part of the preventive campaign, research should be conducted into the causes of pica, the condition that affects most of the children who demonstrate abnormal lead levels. If it is found that pica is caused, at least partly, by a nutritional deficiency, it might be easier to control lead poisoning by eliminating the cause of pica.

Rats

The best way to rid the Lower East Side of rats

would be to rep. g. e. r. e. d. i. c. t. e. housing. A more immediate program would involve substantial improvements in refuse collection, search-and-seizure campaigns in the areas where rats have been most often reported, and educating landlords and tenants on rat control techniques. This could be done on a local community level, possibly through the proposed Environmental Police, as well as by the city. Where residents engage in clean-up campaigns, they should be able to expect and receive full cooperation from the Department of Sanitation, which has not always been the case in the past. An education campaign pursued on the local level, in much the same manner as an anti-lead poisoning effort, can concentrate on the obvious, but necessary, prevention measures such as covering garbage cans and keeping all food in tightly covered containers.

PAYING FOR HEALTH SERVICES

If good health and medical services are to be provided two types of costs must be met: the facilities must be built and equipped and then the costs of dispensing the services--salaries for medical professionals and operating costs for the buildings--must be paid. Medical facilities are extraordinarily costly--the new Gouverneur Hospital will cost more than \$20 million for 210 beds--and cannot be built in any quantity except through public financing. Fortunately, most of the needed investment in major medical facilities serving the Lower East Side is already underway. Bellevue and Gouverneur Hospitals are being rebuilt at a combined cost in excess of \$100 million and additions are being made to Beth Israel Hospital. If additional investment is required, it will probably be channeled through the two public benefit corporations charged with building health and medical facilities: the New York State Health and Mental Hygiene Facilities Improvement Corporation, which is already in operation, and the newly emergent New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation. Both agencies will use appropriated funds, bond issues and federal programs for buildings and equipment.

In regard to the increasingly difficult problem of paying the consumer costs of health care, the only reasonable solution is a national health insurance plan. Such a plan would not only offer pre-paid, comprehensive health care but should be used as an instrument for reforming the present fee-for-service health care revolving around independent private practitioners.

If national or state-wide insurance plans, along the lines proposed in the recent report of the American Assembly or by the Mayor's Commission on Inflation and Economic Welfare, cannot be realized soon, a pre-paid health insurance plan should be formulated for the Lower East Side. Such a plan would operate local health services: extended care and nursing homes and the system of primary health care centers throughout the community. It would also make payments for services rendered to subscribers by other parts of the system: the community hospital (i.e. Gouverneur Hospital) and Bellevue and Beth Israel for intensive medical care.

As a first step Medicare and Medicaid and existing third-party payments would be assigned to the local insurance corporation. Other groups, possibly based on housing projects or local associations, would be organized in pre-paid plans. Eventually these groups and those

merged into one corporation representing local health care consumers (i.e. policyholders in the corporation), health professionals and health officials.

Although the smaller health plans would be easier to organize, larger, more diverse groupings would be easier to finance because of the inclusion of higher income residents and the balancing out of health risks. The corporation would be financed by premiums levied against policyholders who would presumably include a majority of the residents. The amount of the premium would be set in proportion to adjusted gross income. For those whose income is too low to pay the full premium, the balance or, if necessary, the full amount would be paid from funds made available by the Departments of Health and Social Services, federal grants and other sources.

Fee schedules would be set at reasonable levels and administered so as to strongly encourage physicians to affiliate in group practices either privately or in the community health centers, such as operated by NENA. All city and cooperating voluntary hospitals would participate in the corporation to provide a complete range of diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitative services to subscribers. In addition to their regular medical and surgical services. Nursing homes and extended care facilities would also participate in the plan.

As the experience with Medicare and Medicaid has shown, insurance and health care plans by themselves will not produce better health services. Both of these limited improvements have been imposed on a health care system of physicians, hospitals and clinics that is privately motivated and controlled and offers a distinctively inferior type of care to people who cannot pay for it directly. The billions of dollars spent by government under Medicare and Medicaid for health care for the elderly and the poor have simply been absorbed by the existing private system where it has driven up costs for all consumers and failed to produce any reforms in medical training or the organization of medical practice. Any comprehensive health insurance plan must be linked to changes in the medical professions. Such plans should reduce health costs to all consumers by stressing preventive medicine as against the much more costly hospitalization. (Experience in other health plans has shown that only about two hospital beds per 1,000 subscribers are required compared to four for the population outside these plans.) They should also be used to help stimulate new forms of medical organization, such as group practices or physicians working on so many in community health centers that will provide more reliable, inclusive and less costly health care than individual practitioners or the typical hospital clinic. Also, if enough medical manpower is to be available to provide the needed services, the training of medical personnel will have to be changed and broadened. Again, the concept of the individual practitioner as the repository of all ability and knowledge will have to be re-cast. New skill levels for a variety of health and medical tasks and new ways of training people for these tasks, outside of the traditional forms, but in a mixed work-study situation, perhaps centering on a community health plan, will have to be introduced.

9. SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

SUMMARY

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

The Lower East Side's schools need a great deal of attention and improvement. Population studies indicate that enrollment peaks in the elementary and middle grades can be expected within the next few years; moreover, higher percentages of children will be of Puerto Rican and Chinese origin, thus requiring additional programs to overcome language handicaps.

Total figures seem to show that there is enough space to accommodate the pupil population, but in actuality some schools are overcrowded while others, not filled to capacity, are obsolete and utterly inadequate. The recent redistricting plan, scheduled to go into effect shortly, divides the neighborhood in an insensitive and short-sighted manner, lessening the effectiveness of parent groups and discouraging cooperative community participation. Children's reading scores are substantially below city and national averages, despite the fact that considerable money is being spent on a range of special programs.

The proposals below for building new schools are aimed at providing the necessary space and surroundings for modern education. This means replacing obsolete buildings even if enrollment statistics indicate a momentary surplus of seats. That is, obsolete schools are unfit places for children to learn in; their space is not adequate for modern teaching methods and special activities. The proposals also assume the gradual conversion of the present grade organization to a 4-4-4 system. Eight new elementary schools providing 10,200 seats, and four new intermediate schools (one of which is already scheduled for completion in 1972) are proposed, to replace obsolete buildings and reduce crowding. It is suggested that the pre-1920 buildings housing P.S. 169 and P.S. 91, for maladjusted children, be replaced, not necessarily on the Lower East Side. There is already underway a needed addition to Seward Park High School, the only remaining high school in the area.

Priorities for rebuilding have been set bearing in mind the factors of obsolescence, overcrowding, projected changes in enrollment, and minimizing relocation. Suggestions are made to combine new schools with air-rights housing, locate schools on underused park land, or on the same site as old schools.

The program and curriculum of the Lower East Side schools are not fulfilling their responsibility to educate the children, to give them

intellectual and emotional confidence, encourage their inquisitiveness, and capture their imaginations. Therefore the proposals for reform stress the need for radical change in approach and in teacher recruitment. Less emphasis should be placed on rigorous discipline, standardized tests and grades, and completion of a prescribed syllabus, and more on devising innovative methods and attracting sympathetic teachers with original ideas.

Curriculum reform cannot take place on a wide-spread scale unless the educational system dismantles its cumbersome bureaucracy. It has been found that effective schools can be run without the plethora of official forms and clerical workers now existing. Smaller schools with a less institutional environment could reduce the need for red tape and complex procedures, and would also provide an atmosphere more conducive to the growth and learning processes of young children.

Two aspects of the schools' relation to the community were considered. First, the bureaucracy allows no real channels for parent opinion to be effective, a problem which leads to frustration and bitterness on both sides. There fore instead of the Parent-Teachers Associations a system of School-Community committees is proposed, to deal with broader problems of program and such, and to give the community more of a role in determining what goes on in the schools.

Secondly, the schools can no longer remain isolated and disconnected from the neighborhood as they have in the past. The worst effect of this isolation is to produce in the children the feeling that school is unrelated to the rest of their lives (as indeed it often is). The school must reach out into the community in many ways--by remaining open longer hours for non-school activities, by welcoming visiting teachers who are local community people with skills to offer, and by drawing upon the resources of settlement houses, craft shops, artists, and others to broaden the education offered.

POPULATION AND ENROLLMENT TRENDS

The ethnic diversity of the Lower East Side's population is what gives it the vitality it has historically possessed, and is one of the sources of its potentiality to become an exciting urban center. At the same time this very diversity contributes to and aggravates the community's worst problems. In the field of education, the fact that two of the pupil groups (Chinese and Spanish) often have severe language barriers is a major obstacle. Also the difference between home backgrounds with Oriental, Latin, Afro-American and Anglo-Saxon traditions, though it is a rich resource for learning, often becomes, in today's unimaginative classrooms, only a pretext for division and lack of understanding. Somehow the school system must find a way to draw upon these traditions without annihilating them, and create an atmosphere in which each student can define his personal and community identity, while learning the skills necessary to function effectively in contemporary American urban society. For this reason this chapter opens with a rather detailed analysis of the ethnic breakdown of students in the Lower East Side's schools.

ENROLLMENT TRENDS

Elementary, Intermediate, and Junior High Schools

Enrollment peaks are expected in the elementary, intermediate, and junior high schools in about 1977. This growth will be a result of several factors: continued replacement of the older, white population in smaller households by younger and larger family groups; in-migration

of Chinese families, and construction in land that is now substantially vacant.

A comparison of school enrollments for the Lower East Side's public housing projects showed that there was a net decrease of 1,265 in the school population in all the projects from 1962 to 1967, reflecting the decline in the average size of households in public housing. Slight increases in kindergarten enrollment occurred in two of the newer projects and the junior high school enrollment rose in three older projects, an indication of the maturation of families in public housing and the entry of young-or families.

Total enrollment for the elementary and middle grades, as shown in the following Tables, declines by 6 percent, from 26,719 in 1962 to 25,077 in 1968. Accompanying this decline were substantial changes in ethnic composition. During the period from 1962 to December, 1968, the proportions of Puerto Rican students rose from 54 to 60 percent of the total, although Puerto Ricans represented only about 35 percent of the area's population (a result of the comparatively larger size and youthfulness of Puerto Rican households). In all, 61 percent of elementary and middle-school students were of Spanish-speaking backgrounds in 1968. Negro enrollment has remained fairly constant, representing 16 percent of the total in 1962 and 14 percent in 1968, which is roughly proportional to the total Negro population of the Lower East Side. The portion of the enrollment made up of whites, Orientals, and non-Puerto Ricans of Spanish-speaking origin dropped from 30 percent in 1962 to 25 percent in 1968. An even greater decline occurred in the white enrollment than is obvious from the statistics. In 1968, whites represented only 10 percent of the elementary and middle-school enrollment, although they comprised almost half of the total population. The disparity reflects the fact that white households tend to be older, have fewer school-aged children, and are more likely to send their children to parochial schools.

TABLE 28

Ethnic Distribution and Enrollments Elementary and Middle Schools, 1962 and 1968

	Total Enrollment	Negro	%	Puerto Rican	%	Others(a)%	
1962							
Elementary	19,195	3,035	16	10,917	57	5,243	27
Middle	7,524	1,167	16	3,530	47	2,827	38
Total	26,719	4,202	16	14,447	54	8,070	30

	Total Enrollment	Negro	%	Spanish-speaking	%	Oriental	%	Others	%
1968									
Elementary	17,983	2,351	13	11,384	63	2,565	14	1,683	9
Middle	7,094	1,049	15	4,150	59	1,102	16	793	11
Total	25,077	3,400	14	15,534	61	3,667	15	2,476	10

(a) Includes white, Oriental, and other Spanish-speaking people.

Source: New York City Board of Education.

TABLE 29

Enrollments and Ethnic Distribution by School and by District, Elementary and Middle Schools

October, 1962

December, 1962

October, 1962					December, 1962				
Total Enrollment	Negro	%	Puerto Rican	% Other(a) %	Total Enrollment	Negro	% Spanish Speaking	% Oriental	% Other
District 1									
P.S. 4	466	89	19	355	76	22	5		
P.S. 15	1,023	145	14	752	74	126	12		
P.S. 19	778	28	4	375	48	374	48		
P.S. 20	998	28	3	811	81	159	16		
P.S. 34	676	181	27	409	61	180	13		
P.S. 61	1,256	72	6	773	62	410	31		
P.S. 63	1,125	87	8	594	62	344	31		
P.S. 64	1,414	240	17	995	63	279	20		
P.S. 97	1,175	375	32	608	52	192	17		
P.S. 122	501	13	3	254	51	234	47		
P.S. 140	912	118	13	673	74	121	13		
P.S. 160	820	69	8	538	66	213	26		
P.S. 188	1,338	485	36	649	49	204	15		
Sub-Total	12,481	1,930	16	7,786	62	2,765	22		
JHS 22	1,562	357	23	807	52	398	26		
JHS 60	1,378	202	15	712	52	464	34		
JHS 71	1,555	214	14	863	56	478	31		
Sub-Total	4,495	773	17	2,382	53	1,340	30		
Total	16,976	2,703	16	10,168	60	4,105	24		
District 3									
P.S. 23	348	--	--	--	--	--	--		
P.S. 134	1,111	174	16	649	58	288	26		
P.S. 137	951	219	23	645	68	89	9		
P.S. 110	673	101	15	181	27	391	58		
Sub-Total	3,085	494	16	1,475	48	1,136	37		
JHS 56	1,544	277	18	694	45	573	37		
Total	4,629	781	17	2,169	47	1,709	37		
Two Bridges									
P.S. 1	903	213	24	351	39	339	37		
P.S. 2	1,111	176	16	567	51	368	33		
P.S. 42	888	34	4	459	52	395	45		
P.S. 126	727	188	26	279	38	260	36		
Sub-Total	3,629	611	17	1,656	46	1,362	37		
JHS 65	1,485	117	8	454	31	914	62		
Total	5,114	728	14	2,110	41	2,276	45		
TOTAL	26,719	4,202	16	14,447	54	8,070	30		

Note: Percentages have been rounded off and Totals may equal more than 100%

(a) Includes white, Oriental and other Spanish-speaking

Oriental enrollment in the District 3 and Two Bridges schools, however, increased 22 percent in just two years, from 2,490 in 1966 to 3,016 in 1968. The accompanying decrease in the Negro and white school population is mainly attributable to the clearing of tenements for new housing, particularly in the Seward Park Renewal Area.

Comparison of the statistics on ethnic distribution in the elementary and middle schools validate the contention that Puerto Ricans are the fastest-growing and youngest portion of the Lower East Side population. While there are larger percentages of Negro, Oriental, and white students in the intermediate and junior high schools than in the elementary schools, the reverse is true for the Puerto Rican population. Sixty-three percent of the elementary school enrollment and 59 percent of the middle-school enrollment was of Spanish-speaking origin in 1968. As Puerto Rican resident births at the time these elementary school pupils were born ranged from 45 to 57 percent of the total, there must have been an influx of Puerto Rican families with young children in the early 1960's to account for the larger share of school enrollments in the ensuing years. Since Puerto Rican births are still at least half of all resident births, this portion of the school population will probably continue to expand, unless new housing brings large numbers of younger white families in, or the influx of Chinese families displaces Puerto Rican residents in the sections near Chinatown.

High School

Seward Park High School is the only high school serving the Lower East Side since Metropolitan Vocational High School closed in 1969. Because of the district's poor public transportation, Seward Park draws its students from a smaller area than most of the city's other high schools. Nevertheless, since 1961 its enrollment has increased by 32 percent, a result of both the phasing out of Metropolitan Vocational as well as the 1950-51 birth peak.

The Puerto Rican proportion of Seward Park's enrollment increased from 17 to 31 percent between 1962 and 1968. During the same period Negro enrollment rose from 15 to 20 percent, and the proportion of "others" (white and Oriental in 1962) dropped from 68 to 49 percent. The causes of these shifts can be traced to the same overall population factors cited for the primary schools.

TABLE 30

Seward Park High School
Enrollment and Ethnic Distribution,
1962 - 1968

	1962		1968		Percent Change
	Number	%	Number	%	
Enrollment	3,105	100.0	4,099	100.0	+32.0
Negro	458	14.8	19.8		+5.0
Puerto Rican	537	17.3	1,268	31.0	+13.7
Oriental			594	14.5	
Other	2,110	68.0	1,425	34.8	-18.7

TURNOVER IN ENROLLMENT

Information on the rate of student turnover is useful as an indicator of community stability, and reveals something about the degree of educational continuity that can be expected. (The turnover rate means the total number of admissions and withdrawals in proportion to total enrollment.)

According to estimates made by the principals of several schools in District 1 with large Spanish-speaking enrollments, the turnover rate for the 1967-1968 school year was a very high 60 to 80 percent. More precise information made available by the Two Bridges Demonstration District Office indicated that the turnover rate in that district's four elementary schools was 35 to 40 percent during the same period. In Junior High School 65, the turnover was about 25 percent. The city-wide elementary school turnover was 41 percent and the junior high school rate was 29 percent.

In a community where over one-third of the elementary school population may change during the year, the continuity of instruction, student comprehension, and classroom order cannot help but suffer.

SECTARIAN SCHOOLS

Parochial school enrollments on the Lower East Side have been declining. While public school enrollment at the elementary and intermediate school levels remained close to 25,000 during the period from 1962 to 1967, enrollments for Catholic and Jewish schools experienced a decrease of more than 22 percent. The fact that the drop in parochial school enrollments from 10,582 to 8,207 did not accompany any comparable increase in public school rolls indicates that a good part of the parochial schools' decline may be a result of emigration from the area. La Salle Academy, a Catholic high school and the only parochial school to register an increase in enrollment, serves a city-wide population.

The 1967-68 enrollment in Jewish elementary schools was 67 percent of the 1962-63 totals; at the high school level, the 1967-68 enrollment was 70 percent of the 1962-63 figure. The Catholic elementary schools, which have an enrollment about twice as large as all of the Jewish schools combined, recorded a 21 percent drop in the same period.

The decline in parochial school enrollments seems to be a city-wide trend. Acceleration of the rate of decline on the Lower East Side, where parochial schools serve about twenty percent of the total school population, could result in a sudden influx into public schools, which are now at about capacity.

THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

EXISTING BUILDINGS

Age, Condition and Facilities

Of the twenty-six elementary, intermediate, and junior high schools on the Lower East Side (see the accompanying illustration), fourteen were built prior to 1920; half of these have more recent additions. The buildings occupied by P.S. 169 and P.S. 91 (Schools for Socially and Emotionally Maladjusted Children), the Seward Park High School Annex, and the old Metropolitan Vocational High School (now used by J.H.S. 65) also predate 1920. Considering their age, the Lower East Side's school buildings are in fairly good condition and appear to be maintained as well as can be expected.

All of the older structures share the problem of inadequate facilities for contemporary teaching methods. Schools of World War I vintage often do not have laboratories, music and art rooms, kindergarten space, small group work and individual instruction space, libraries, adequate play space, gymnasium, cafeteria, teachers' rooms, and sufficient storage space. Putting these features into a building of basically obsolete design is likely to be physically unfeasible or prohibitively costly.

A more basic problem is the inadequacy of structure and supportive systems, such as plumbing and electricity, in many of the older buildings. P.S. 23, built in 1892, for instance, uses DC current and is heated by a coalburning furnace. Structural deficiencies, often a result of antiquated building methods, make it impractical to improve some of these old schools extensively. For example, P.S. 23 and P.S. 122 were built with wooden joists, now considered a fire hazard. At the same time, fire exit provisions are inadequate in some of the old schools.

On the basis of visits to a number of the schools it is felt that at least some of them could be made adequate, by improvements such as (1) the provision of laboratory, music, art, team teaching or individual instruction rooms; (2) soundproofing of gymnasium areas; (3) enlargement of cafeteria space or facilities; (4) addition of storage, dressing rooms, or shop equipment; (5) installation of fluorescent lighting, painting, or other minor repairs. It should be noted that improvements in items 1 through 4 would tend to reduce capacities, and that the second and third items would be expensive. The schools considered eligible for such improvements include Seward Park High School, Junior High School 71, P.S. 61 and P.S. 15. (Renovations were under way in Seward Park High School at the time of the visits.)

Capacity

The Board of Education's official capacity figures have often been disputed. At present the approach is to multiply the number of "regular classrooms" by an average class size. The category "regular classrooms" excludes special facilities such as shop and music rooms, and rooms which cannot be readily converted to regular classroom use. Average class size is based on the maximum class sizes stipulated in

the United Federation of Teachers' contract with the Board of Education. The maximum class sizes for the Lower East Side are 15 in pre-kindergarten, 25 in kindergarten, 32 in elementary schools, 30 in junior high schools, and 34 in high school academic classes.

Based on these standards, classes in Lower East Side schools are not overcrowded. According to official capacities listed in the Board's 1967-68 School Utilization Book, the average size of classes in six selected special service elementary schools in the Lower East Side ranged from 27 to 29. The average sizes of classes in three Lower East Side junior high schools, however, was 30 for J.H.S. 71, 22 for J.H.S. 65, and 31 in J.H.S. 60.

There is a considerable difference between the official capacities recorded by the Board and the actual capacities according to the principals of the schools. The principals of six Lower East Side schools reported capacities ranging from 36 to 204 places fewer than listed in the Utilization Book. In two of the schools, J.H.S. 60 and P.S. 63, capacities were reduced by impending renovations. In several other schools, classrooms included in the official capacity count were actually devoted to other than normal classroom use, but were listed as available for use by regular classes.

Numerically, there is a gross surplus of more than 3,000 places in the Lower East Side's elementary, intermediate and junior high schools (see the Utilization Tables below.) Statistics such as these, however, are extremely misleading; they do not mean that there is no overcrowding. Nine of the 26 schools, containing a third of the total capacity, are seriously overcrowded, i.e., utilization rates are more than 100 percent. Many of the schools that seem to be underutilized are older buildings scheduled for replacement. Schools adjacent to renewal areas where demolition has already taken place tend to be underutilized during the construction period. Overcrowding is particularly severe in the area east of Tompkins Square Park and north of Houston Street.

Some of the crowding in P.S. 63, an obsolete junior high school, has been temporarily relieved by housing 23 classes with a roster of 591 students in the old Metropolitan Vocational High School on Catherine Street. J.H.S.

TABLE 31

Seward Park High School Utilization
1968 - 1969

	<u>Capacity (a)</u>	<u>Enrollment (b)</u>	<u>Utilization Rate (%)</u>
1968	3,468	4,099	118
1969	3,391	4,098	121

(a) Capacity of P.S. 31, the Seward Park High School Annex, has been computed at 950. This figure includes that number plus capacity of main building.

(b) Main enrollment decreased by 74, annex enrollment increased 173 from 1968 to 1969.

Source: New York City Board of Education, School Utilization Books, 1968-69, 1969-70.

ILLUSTRATION 9

SCHOOLS



- Existing Public Schools to be Retained
- ★ Existing Private Schools
- ▲ Private Schools to be Replaced

- ★ Higher Education
- General Location of New Schools Proposed in This Plan
- ◻ Existing Public Schools to be Replaced

TABLE 3.

Estimated Utilization of
Elementary and Middle Schools
October, 1969

District	Computed Capacity	Enroll- ment	Utilization Rate (%)
P.S. 4	1,073	438	41
P.S. 15	987	1,094	111
P.S. 19	897	553	62
P.S. 20	1,036	1,118	108
P.S. 34	664	645	97
P.S. 61	1,275	947	74
P.S. 63	1,151	1,002	87
P.S. 64	1,397	1,435	103
P.S. 97	1,213	844	70
P.S. 122	260	388	149
P.S. 140	1,127	920	82
P.S. 160	921	639	69
P.S. 188	1,170	1,366	117
Sub-Total	13,171	13,399	102
JHS 22	1,471	1,399	95
JHS 60	957	1,084	113
JHS 71	1,361	1,367	100
Sub-Total	3,889	3,868	100
Total	17,060	17,259	101
District 3			
P.S. 23	622	462	74
P.S. 134	1,057	716	68
P.S. 137	1,011	691	68
P.S. 110	868	584	67
Sub-Total	3,558	2,453	69
JHS 56	1,591	1,449	91
Total	5,149	3,902	76
Two Bridges			
P.S. 1	764	867	113
P.S. 2	1,278	1,030	81
P.S. 42	949	1,172	123
P.S. 126	1,090	994	91
Sub-Total	4,081	4,063	100
JHS 65	1,341	1,103	82
Total	5,423	5,166	95
Elementary School Total	19,943	17,223	86
Middle School Total	6,721	6,420	96
Grand Total	26,664	23,643	89

(a) Experimental Elementary Program

(b) 23 classes (enrollment of 591) are housed in the old Metropolitan Vocational High School Building and not included in this figure.

Source: New York City Board of Education,
1969-70 School Utilization Book.

60, smallest of the Lower East Side (the middle school), and J.H.S. 71, are all overcrowded. J.S. 2 and J.H.S. 56 are being added close to capacity.

Seward Park High School's enrollment exceeded capacity by more than 700, even with the use of its 67-year-old annex (the old P.S. 1) building located three-quarters of a mile away. Including the annex capacity, Seward Park is still the third most crowded school in the Lower East Side. Without the annex, its enrollment is 68 percent greater than its capacity.

The tables below show the computed capacity, enrollment and utilization rate in 1969-70 for all public schools on the Lower East Side.

A S FOR A SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAM

The City Planning Department's school planning policy has been to provide additional capacity to remedy overcrowding; however, it does not replace obsolete structures simply because they are obsolete. Despite the apparent urgency of school plans on the Lower East Side, more space is needed. In many instances, because existing schools are obsolete and unable to accommodate a modern educational program. In addition, more space is needed to handle the enrollment that will be generated by shifts in population, changes in birth rates, and new housing. These factors have been taken into account in setting goals for a building program that will allow for the virtual conversion of the entire system from a pre-kindergarten through sixth grade organization to the 4-4-4 plan.

The dark tone on the illustration of the school system denotes the service areas where overcrowded schools (many of which are also pre-1920 vintage) are concentrated. Not surprisingly this irregular zone where schools' facilities are inadequate generally coincides with areas of poor housing, as shown on Map 3 (Building Condition).

Elementary School, containing 12,678 seats, will be replaced with eight new schools providing a total of 10,200 seats. When added to the standard (sound) capacity of 8,000 seats in existing elementary schools, the Lower East Side will have a total lower school capacity of 18,200. Although this is almost 1,800 seats (the equivalent of one school) less than existing capacity, in view of population change, reorganization plans and utilization rates, it will be sufficient for the present future. Two of these schools, P.S. 124 and P.S. 147, each with 1,200 seats, are already in advanced planning and site acquisition stages. This capacity will also be enough for conversion of a 4-4-4 plan; recent project on land area that only 15,500 of the 18,200 seats would be required during the next two years if the system were converted at this time.

The Table entitled Proposed Elementary School Building Program summarizes the building program, indicating which existing schools are to be replaced and the proposed capacities and locations of the replacement. The illustration presents some of the same information graphically.

The Proposed Intermediate School Building Program Table shows four new intermediate schools. They will provide 6,200 seats and will replace

TABLE 33

<u>Proposed Elementary School Building Program</u>					
Present School	Year Built	Present Capacity	Replacement	Proposed Capacity	Location
P.S. 4	1906	1,073	P.S. 142 (est. completion 1972)	1,200	Ridge, Rivington
P.S. 160	1898	921			
P.S. 1	1898	764	P.S. 124 (est. completion 1972)	1,200	Division, Bowery
P.S. 23	1892	622(a)			
P.S. 42(b)	1899	949	No designation	1,200	Expanded present location
P.S. 127	1894	260			
P.S. 63	1905	1,151(c)	No designation	1,200	P.S. 169, 4th St., First, Second Aves.
P.S. 97	1915	1,213			
P.S. 188	1904	1,170(d)	No designation	1,800	East River Park, Houston Street
P.S. 1	1904	987	No designation	1,200	Expanded present location
P.S. 61	1913	1,275			
P.S. 64	1905	1,397	No designation	1,200	Avenue B Tompkins Square
P.S. 110	1902	896	No designation	1,200	Seward Park Renewal Area
Existing Subordinate Capacity		12,678	Proposed Capacity	10,200	

(a) Part of P.S. 23 capacity can be shifted to P.S. 130 once P.S. 21 is built allowing change in district lines.

(b) P.S. 124 would be used as temporary replacement for P.S. 42 until school is rebuilt on expanded present location.

(c) P.S. 63 can be used at reduced capacity for several years.

(d) P.S. 188 can be used at reduced capacity for several years.

TABLE 34

<u>Proposed Intermediate School Building Program</u>				
School	Present Capacity	Replacement	Proposed Capacity	Location
New School	--	P.S. 25 (est. completion 1972)	1,800	Norfolk, Stanton, Suffolk, Rivington
P.S. 65	1,341(a)	P.S. 131	1,800	Sara Delano Roosevelt Parkway south of Hester Street Bowery, Spring Street
New School	--	No designation	1,800	
New School	--	No designation	800-1,000	P.S. 60 addition or nearby

Proposed Capacity 6,200

(a) 23 classes (register 591) are housed in the old Metropolitan Vocational High School and not included in this figure.

obsolete facilities and allow for inclusion of a fourth grade by 1975. One of these schools, P.S. 25, is scheduled for completion in 1972. When added to the existing, standard capacity of 5,380 a total of 11,580 intermediate school places will be available, about 5,000 more places than in existing middle schools. The additional capacity is needed to absorb the fourth grade and to provide needed space in a middle-school system that now has a measured utilization of 96 percent of capacity, and an actual rate probably in excess of 100 percent.

Seward Park High School needs an additional 1,200 seats to permit the phasing out of the non-specialized vocational high schools and their conversion to a regular four-year program. A site for this addition, directly north of the present school, has already been designated and plans are underway.

The two pre-1920 schools, P.S. 169 and P.S. 91, that are now used for socially and emotionally maladjusted children ("600" schools) should have a top priority for replacement. Considering the wide areas these schools serve they need not be replaced on the Lower East Side.

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAM

In determining priorities for new school construction on the Lower East Side, building obsolescence, overcrowding, and projected changes in enrollments must all be considered. Priorities have also been set with an attempt to minimize relocation resulting from school construction. For this reason, serious thought should be given to:

a) Combining schools with air-rights housing under the auspices of the Educational Construction Fund, as is already being done in the case of P.S. 124 at Division Street and the Bowery.

b) Locating schools in some of the under-utilized Lower East Side parks and replacing the park land in other places. Portions of both Sara D. Roosevelt Park and East River Park are proposed as sites for new schools.

c) Locating new schools on the site of old schools scheduled for replacement. The proposed replacement for P.S. 42 will be built in this manner.

Map 6, Proposals, and the School Illustration show the location of the schools recommended in the building program.

Elementary School Building Program

In 1968-69, capacity at the elementary level was about 20,000 for an enrollment of 17,200. In anticipation of decreases in the elementary school enrollment and conversion to the 4-4-4 system of organization, the Board of Education's master plan for 1968-74 proposed five new elementary schools. These buildings, each with a capacity of 1,200, would replace 12 of the 13 pre-1920 structures. (P.S. 63 is considered up to standard.) The table below shows their priority in the Board of Education's 1970-71 capital budget submission.

In the first stage of construction two buildings, P.S. 142 and P.S. 124, are planned. P.S. 142 (Ridge, Rivington, Attorney and Delancey Streets), expected to be ready for occupancy in 1972, will replace P.S. 4 and P.S. 160. The second school, P.S. 124 (Canal, Forsyth, Division Streets and the Bowery) is supposed to replace P.S. 1 and P.S. 42. This is an Educational Construction Fund Project with middle-income housing built

TABLE 5

Board of Education Recommendations for 1970-71 Capital Budget Replacement Priorities

Present School	Replacement	Priority
P.S. 64		
P.S. 122	P.S. 18	257
P.S. 1		
P.S. 42	P.S. 124	E F 6
P.S. 15		
P.S. 188	P.S. 178	18c
P.S. 97	P.S. 204	308
P.S. 65	P.S. 131	142
P.S. 130	--	164
P.S. 91		291
P.S. 82 (now 169)	--	104
P.S. 23	P.S. 4	177
P.S. 4		
P.S. 160	P.S. 142	Underway

over the school. Construction is scheduled to start in mid-1971.

Although it was not included in the Board's original master plan, the next project will probably be replacement of P.S. 21, at Spring and Elizabeth Streets, one block west of the study area boundary. The building is now used by the Board's maintenance department. At the same time, the Board decided, as a result of preliminary engineering surveys, not to build an addition to P.S. 130 at Baxter and Hester Streets. Instead, the new P.S. 21, with a capacity of 1,000, would relieve P.S. 130 of some of its heavy pupil load. The district lines could then be changed so that P.S. 130 could absorb some of P.S. 23's enrollment.

The present replacement schedule poses several problems. The combined enrollments of P.S. 1 and P.S. 42 already exceed the planned capacity of P.S. 124. Furthermore, the removal of P.S. 4 will leave a very large area without any elementary school at all. It is recommended therefore that P.S. 124 be used as a temporary replacement for P.S. 42, and only until another project can replace that school, one of the most obsolete and overcrowded in the Lower East Side, as close as possible to its present location. Then a 1,000-seat school on or near P.S. 42's present site would eventually replace that school. P.S. 124 would then replace P.S. 1 and absorb that portion of the P.S. 1 enrollment not taken care of by P.S. 130. P.S. 21 could then be phased out.

After the new P.S. 21, P.S. 124 and P.S. 42 are underway, it is recommended that the following additional projects, listed in order of priority, be undertaken:

P.S. 160 (113 East 4th St.) and P.S. 91 (198 Forsyth Street)

P.S. 169 is a boy's elementary school and P.S. 91 accommodates boys in grades 7 to 11. Despite some modernization, both buildings are obsolete and inadequate. Although the Board of Education listed them as project priorities

295 and 304 in their 1967-70 capital budget submission, more immediate replacement is recommended. Buildings considered unfit for the education of average students should not be used to accommodate "problem" children.

Since these schools serve children from throughout the borough, replacement on the Lower East Side is not essential. Considering the nature of the services offered in these special schools and the fact that large classrooms are not needed, it might be reasonable to utilize rented space in public and private institutions or even renovated commercial buildings. It would be preferable for these schools to be located in what might be termed "non-institutional" surroundings. Removal of these two buildings would release sites for other uses, such as housing or other schools.

P.S. 122, 150 First Avenue

Despite improvements being made in this building, serious problems will recur and probably intensify because of structural faulting. The school is overcrowded, recreational space is inadequate and facilities are obsolete.

Immediate and temporary relief could be achieved by redistricting some of the P.S. 122 students to P.S. 19, an underutilized school less than two blocks away. A new school with a capacity of 1,200 should be built to replace P.S. 122 and P.S. 63 which is also more than 50 years old. A possible location is the P.S. 169 site with the addition of some or all of the commercial and residential buildings on the eastern end of the block. If the school could be developed under the auspices of the Educational Construction Fund the larger site would be preferable.

P.S. 97, Houston, Branch and Mangin Sts.

This school should be replaced, particularly in light of the proposed addition to Baruch Houses. A school with a capacity of 1,800 located in the East River Park near Houston Street could replace P.S. 97 and allow for the ultimate phasing out of P.S. 188, also a pre-1920 school, on the northern side of Houston Street.

P.S. 15, 333 East 4th Street

Even with its 15-year-old addition, this pre-1920 school is one of the most overcrowded in the Lower East Side. There have been minor improvements to the interior and there is a fairly large outdoor play area extending through to Fifth Street. But judging from the shabby appearance of the interior and exterior of both the original structure and the additions, there appears to be a basic maintenance problem.

As several buildings have already been demolished on the eastern end of the block (near Avenue D), this might be a good location for a new school. If the 100 or so remaining families could be relocated nearby. Once a replacement is built, the original structure could be demolished. The easternmost addition might be retained to supplement the school space while the other addition is used for a community purpose. A new school should have a 1,200 seat capacity.

One more school with 1,200 seats should be planned to replace P.S. 61 and P.S. 64. This building, if located on Avenue B near Tompkins Square, could accommodate any increase in enrollment resulting from residential development planned in that area.

Intermediate Level School Building Program

Projections indicate that junior high school enrollments are now at a peak and a decline

is not expected until 1973. All five intermediate and junior high schools on the Lower East Side are overcrowded.

When I.S. 25 (Norfolk, Stanton, Suffolk, and Rivington Streets) is completed, it is reserved for only local use. Total intermediate capacity will be increased from the present 6,700 to about 8,500. If a fourth grade is to be included, capacity must be increased to allow for an enrollment of 11,500 by 1976.

The first project after I.S. 25 should be I.S. 131, a new 1,800-seat school to provide additional capacity in the Two Bridges-Chinatown area and replace the overcrowded and obsolete P.S. 65. A possible site is Sara Delano Roosevelt Parkway, across the street from the present school. The old school location could then be developed under the auspices of the Educational Construction Fund to provide additional low-income housing. Although site acquisition funds for I.S. 131 were approved by the Board of Estimate and City Council in March, 1970, no site has been designated yet.

Middle-range goals should include construction of another 1,800-seat intermediate school in the Bowery-Spring Street vicinity. This school could handle increases in enrollment that might result from the Cooper Square renewal. The third project should be an addition to I.S. 60 of about 800 seats, or a nearby replacement school of 800 to 1,000 seats. The choice would depend on the usability of I.S. 60, which will be 50 years old in 1974.

High School Level Building Program

The current peak in enrollment at Seward Park High School is not expected to diminish until about 1976, when it should be around 3,600 for grades 10 to 12.

Construction of the 1,500-seat addition (at Delancey, Essex, Broome and Ludlow Streets) with phasing out of the present annex, will bring Seward Park's capacity to 4,000. According to current trends, enrollment for grades 9 through 12 will not diminish to 4,000 until about 1982.

If the Board of Education's intention is to include the 9th grade in the high school much before this date, the addition must be enlarged. The possibility of accommodating 500 academic students in Metropolitan Vocational High School, an old but sound building in pleasant surroundings, might also be considered, though this could not be done immediately. The use of Metropolitan would also result in a comprehensive school, without additional expenditure. Since high schools throughout the borough are overcrowded, relief from outside the area cannot be expected.

Use of Renovated or Rented Facilities

Utilization of rented facilities in public or private buildings (churches, YMCA's, settlement houses) or renovated commercial space could provide additional "instant" accommodations for mini-schools. This method was used satisfactorily by the experimental First Street School and has been recommended by several educators.

In addition to providing the kind of non-institutional setting that is ideal for special students, such as those now attending the Schools for Socially and Emotionally Maladjusted Children in dilapidated school buildings, the mini-schools would be suitable for primary grade instruction. The intricate tools and equipment that some teachers use are often less important

than the talent and ingenuity of the instructor.

With fewer students per building, disciplinary problems would probably decrease and administrators could reduce, if not eliminate, the unpleasant regimentation that is now so common in urban schools.

PRESENT PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM

In a world that places an exalted value on education as a way of opening up opportunities and equalizing chances for "success," most students attending Lower East Side schools are at a serious disadvantage. Perhaps asking the schools in a depressed and despairing neighborhood to compensate for deficiencies in personal, family and community life, while preparing youngsters to make their way in the world, is imposing too large a burden. Nevertheless, by most measurements the public schools are failing to give children of the Lower East Side the necessary skills and encouragement to overcome their environment. If a youngster does graduate from high school he may have acquired the talents that will let him hold a low-paying job with a limited future. It is unlikely that he will have the abilities and motivation necessary for transcending the background that has nurtured him.

The schools themselves are well aware of their responsibilities. In recent years they have sought to develop a curriculum that will overcome environmental lacks and prepare students for adult demands. The basic curriculum reflects a concern for the fundamental tools and skills, such as language and mathematics, needed in an urban society. Sometimes these are taught in innovative ways in the hope of stimulating intelligence and inquisitiveness. Supplementing basic studies are a range of new programs designed to enrich the school experience; these are discussed below.

However, despite these efforts things remain much the same in the public schools, not because the innovations are valueless, but because they are grafted onto an obsolete, rigid, and unimaginative core system, rather than integrated into the program, or allowed to dominate the atmosphere. Then again, they are implemented by teachers often old-fashioned in their views on education and children, or too inexperienced to do more than maintain basic order, or insensitive and unsympathetic to their pupils.

This section will attempt to give an idea of the level of educational achievement on the Lower East Side, partly using the basic yardsticks such as standard tests, for lack of better evidence. Some programs, especially the compensatory ones, will be examined to see how they contribute to the educational experience.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Evaluating Academic Achievement

Poor reading and lack of verbal skill are generally acknowledged as the foremost educational handicaps of disadvantaged children. As these children move up through the grades, such deficiencies tend to compound and become increasing obstacles to academic achievement.

Many educators question the validity of achievement tests in evaluating the progress and predicting the educational potential of children from deprived backgrounds. Nevertheless, in many instances, such tests are the only criteria available for comparing achievement. Even though socio-economic factors may significantly slant the results of such tests, for our purposes the scores do show the vital deficiency that exists in the Lower East Side schools.

Results of the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Test, which is administered annually to all public school students, indicated that pupils in the Lower East Side schools were, on the average, four months behind their national counterparts in the second grade and seven months behind in the fourth grade. The Lower East Side students averaged five months behind their counterparts throughout the city in both grades. The two outstanding exceptions were P.S. 23, with complete Chinese enrollment, where students were a month ahead of the city norm in the second grade and about a year advanced in fourth grade, and P.S. 126, which serves the largely moderate-income Knickerbocker Village as well as many Chinese families. Scores in the latter school, which was part of the Two Bridges Demonstration District, were two months ahead in second grade and at the city-wide average in fourth grade. The four elementary schools in the Demonstration District all registered higher scores than most of the other Lower East Side schools. But the reading levels were still two months behind the city average in second grade and five months behind in fourth grade.

In the higher grades the gap between the Lower East Side reading scores and the overall city average increased. The average score for Lower East Side seventh-graders was eight months behind the city average; ninth-graders were nine months behind. Generally, the Lower East Side junior high school students' scores were about two years below the national averages in both the seventh and ninth grades.

It is difficult to determine the causes of the obvious deficiency in the Lower East Side public schools. The schools with the worst reading scores are located in District 1 and all have enrollments ranging from one-half to three-quarters Puerto Rican. The children are often unaccustomed to using English when they enter school. Because of an absence of adequate programs to make up for their language deficiencies, the youngsters fall farther and farther behind in reading achievement. Many of the Chinese pupils, however, also come from homes where little or no English is spoken. Nevertheless, P.S. 23, which had only one non-Chinese pupil in 1967-68, had the highest reading scores in the entire Lower East Side. The higher average scores for the Two Bridges Demonstration District may be due to the special programs and smaller class sizes, the smaller percentage of Puerto Rican pupils, the larger percentage of Chinese and middle-class white youngsters, or a combination of all three factors. For the most part, the schools with the highest Puerto Rican enrollments had the lowest scores.

Remedial Program

To assist the over 800,000 sizeable Spanish-speaking and Chinese-speaking populations, the school has a program of English as a second language. Normally, there is one teacher who takes four groups of 12 children, each group for five periods a week--obviously a fairly intensive program. At present children are placed in the program on the basis of the home-room teacher's assessment of their fluency, and an oral interview; they move on (or out) as they progress in the language.

The approach to the language problem needs to be revamped. The present program is intensive--it has small classes and meets daily--yet it is not working, as the evidence from the reading scores shows. One approach might be to remove children who have difficulty with English from the regular school program for two or three months, and teach nothing but English (reading and writing) so that when they returned to regular classes they could follow the material. Or the possibility of teaching a half-day in Spanish and half in English might be considered. But with forty-five minutes of English a day, a child might require a year of two to be brought up to the level necessary for ordinary school work, and the skills taught in English during that period would be lost on him.

Title I Programs

Title I supplies the bulk of Elementary and Secondary Education Act funds for programs designed to meet the special needs of educationally disadvantaged children from low-income areas. Most Title I programs are decentralized to permit school districts to devise their own projects in consultation with parents and community groups.

Some of the projects financed by this title have included after-school study centers offering both remedial courses in reading and mathematics and enrichment courses in fields such as Afro-American and Puerto Rican history and culture. District I has used Title I funds to finance a homework-helper program in which local high school students are paid to tutor elementary school children individually. This program has been remarkably successful; not only has the school work and attentiveness of the students improved, but the tutors themselves have done better in high school. Unfortunately, the available funds only permit thirty students in each school to be tutored for two sessions a week. This is very insufficient considering how far behind many lower-school students now are, and the benefits that have been shown to accrue to students and tutors both.

Title I funds may also be used to reduce class size; provide additional guidance counselors and subject specialists; expand early childhood programs; and provide additional services in schools for emotionally disturbed children.

Program for Disruptive Children

Eleven schools have special all-day programs for students who otherwise might be "candidates for suspension." The subject matter is the usual, but there is a flexible format that can respond to the pace and receptivity of individual students and class groups. About 140 elementary school students were involved in this program in the fall of 1969.

Generally, in the elementary grades regular teachers are able to work out problems of dis-

ruptive children; principal reported no more than four pupil suspensions a year. In the junior high schools the problem is more complex and difficult to handle within the confines of the classroom. Professional assistance is often required and students are likely to leave the school after they reach a certain stage of disruptiveness. J.H.S. 65 has a psychiatric social worker who concentrates on 30 to 40 children. J.H.S. 71 has two guidance counselors. J.H.S. 22 had three family social workers, two guidance counselors (academic and vocational), a psychiatrist, and a psychologist. They may work together on individual cases. The principal estimated there were 70 disruptive children in this school.

The fact that such specialists are employed indicates that the schools realize the psychological sources of much of pupil disruptiveness. However, underneath this modernity, the very term employed, "discipline problems," and the discussions among educators of how to maintain "discipline," point to the worn-out, rigid mentality that still haunts the classroom. As the recent spate of books criticizing the educational system indicates, children are disruptive when they are bored, when somehow what is happening in the classroom has no meaning or relevance to them. It is the task of the schools now not to impose more rigorous punishments on "discipline problems" but to find ways of engaging their interest by a radical revision of teaching methods.

Early Childhood and Kindergarten Programs

It is now widely accepted that during the first five years of life children develop almost all of their learning methods, patterns of perception, and other qualities that make up what is known as adult intelligence. Therefore the need for early education, beginning even at age two, is clear.

In 1969-70 every school on the Lower East Side except for P.S. 23 (the only non-Special Service school) had kindergarten and pre-kindergarten (four-year-old) programs. P.S. 110, one of 12 schools in the Experimental Elementary Program, also has 27 three-year-olds in two half-day programs. Total kindergarten enrollment for the Lower East Side during the 1969-70 school year was 2,044. Pre-kindergarten enrollment is 796, while Headstart classes (supported directly by OEO) enroll about 600 children. These levels are inadequate, both in terms of the present population and the continuing influx of poorer families with small children. Based only on resident births for the 1964-65 period, the Lower East Side had a deficit of well over a thousand regular kindergarten seats and about 2,000 pre-kindergarten places during the 1969-70 school year.

Special Service Schools

All of the Lower East Side's elementary and middle schools except for P.S. 23 are designated as Special Service Schools. This program, devised in the 1950's, covers about 280 elementary and 72 middle schools throughout the city. Schools in the program are those with a high proportion of slow learners and children with reading and language limitations, both conditions prevalent on the Lower East Side.

Class sizes are limited, but still not enough to permit much individual attention by the teacher. Extra personnel are assigned to provide additional teaching, guidance, supervisory, and administrative assistance; larger allotments for textbooks and supplies are provided.

The program's annual cost per pupil is about \$200 more than it is in the regular schools.

More Effective Schools (MES)

P.S. 134 and P.S. 137 will be the only Lower East Side schools added to the More Effective Schools program, which will involve 31 schools in the city by the fall of 1970. The program is aimed at helping Negro and Spanish-speaking children by preventing academic failure in the early years. More Effective Schools are located in racially imbalanced areas, areas that are integrated or those where integration is possible, and integrated areas that are beginning to lose middle-class pupils.

The basic features of the MES program are similar to those offered in the Special Service Schools, but effort is much more intense. The cost per pupil is about \$550 more in the MES program (\$1,300 compared to \$750). Children are grouped on a varied basis and classes in grades one to six are clustered with four teachers for every three classes. In addition to teaching specialists, guidance counselors, psychologists and social workers, MES schools are each assigned a community relations teacher who works directly with the community, helping interpret the program's goals and guidelines.

Experimental Elementary Program (EEP)

P.S. 110 is one of 12 schools in the city selected for a special Federal program to strengthen elementary education. A formidable compensatory program, costing about \$1 million a year, features, at P.S. 110, a 9 to 5 school day, maximum class sizes of 22, psychological examinations, and increased utilization of specialists and paraprofessionals. Two regular teachers, with overlapping morning and afternoon shifts, and one paraprofessional, work with each class. Furthermore, about 12 visiting specialists assist in certain curriculum areas. The school day is broken into periods, similar to the secondary schools' schedule. Teachers from each level do the lesson planning as a group.

The only available statistics on the success of the program are the results of the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Tests. They indicate a drop in scores in both the second and fourth grades. Second and fourth-graders scored 3.1 and 4.8 respectively. In April, 1968, before the school joined the EEP program, and 2.5 and 4.0 a year later.

Interestingly, the white and Oriental portion of P.S. 110's enrollment decreased from 47 percent during 1967-68 to 40 percent in 1968-69. Such changing reading scores and enrollments could reflect the findings of the Coleman Report, Equality of Educational Opportunity, which concluded that the presence of more motivated and higher-achieving pupils from higher socio-economic backgrounds was the principal favorable influence on the academic achievement of minority group pupils. The report found that with other variables constant, organizational efforts at educational improvement such as reduced class size accounted for little difference in pupil achievement.

HIGH SCHOOL

At present there are two categories of high schools: vocational and academic. Vocational schools concentrate on preparing the student to begin a trade immediately upon graduation. Emphasis is on practice and shop courses and

instruction is offered in a variety of trades, from printing to design to professional food preparation. The goal of academic schools is preparation for higher education or off-the-job work. The Board of Education's policy is to phase out most vocational schools, by converting academic schools to comprehensive schools which will include a vocational program. The motive is to end the supposedly stigmatizing and educationally limiting segregation of vocational track students. The Lower East Side now has only one academic high school, Seward Park, since the area's vocational high school, Metropolitan Vocational, was closed in June, 1969.

Thirty-six percent of the June, 1966 graduates of Lower East Side junior high schools went on to a vocational school. Breakdowns by specific vocational school were not available. Another 28 percent went to Seward Park High School, 6 percent went to Washington Irving High School, and 11 percent went to Harlem High School.

Seward Park is considered a "good" school by Manhattan standards. The school's reading scores compared satisfactorily with other city high schools. In April, 1967, tenth-grade students at Seward Park had average reading scores of 9.3; the city-wide average was 9.7 and the national 10.7.

An effort is made at Seward Park to keep students from being lost in the general program, which allows an almost unlimited and hence undirected range of courses. However, the shortage of guidance staff to aid the general student in his choices means that he can graduate unprepared for either work or further schooling. A study conducted by the City Planning Commission in 1967 revealed that many employers preferred to hire academic track drop-outs rather than general course graduates, who lacked basic reading and math as well as vocational skills.

At Seward Park stress is laid on career-oriented activities. Academic students are encouraged to take typing, shorthand, and other clerical subjects. Instruction is offered in use of office machines and commercial students take civil service exams during the school year. Seward Park completed follow-up studies on graduates of several years ago. Preliminary examination of data shows that more than 60 percent went on to some form of post-high school education, and that the rate of job placement has been higher in the past few years than previously.

SCHOOLS FOR SOCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY MALADJUSTED CHILDREN

Pupils who are severely disruptive in regular schools may be referred to a school for socially and emotionally maladjusted children. Other students are referred upon release from institutions. Pupil-teacher ratio is kept at twelve to one, and the staff is trained in dealing with disturbed children.

Two of these schools are located in the Lower East Side, although they serve students from a much larger area. P.S. 169, for about 150 boys in grades five to eight, now occupies the structure at 113 East 4th Street that was originally P.S. 614 and was used by P.S. 82, another school for socially and emotionally maladjusted children, until last year. P.S. 169 will move back to its original location on 87th Street when a new building is completed. The other school, P.S. 91 at 198 Forsyth Street, has

about 150 million student. In grade nine to eleven.

Upon referral to the school, a new student is screened by a committee composed of a psychologist, a social worker, a guidance counselor, and the principal. A case of severe disturbance may then be referred to a residential institution.

The "600" program emphasizes reading, speaking, and writing. These children have great difficulty with word recognition and intensive work is necessary to overcome blocks. Shop, physical training, music and art activities are also important in the program. Students who have made "successful adjustments" are returned to regular schools: In 1968, about one-quarter of the student at these two schools returned to regular schools.

TEACHING STAFF

Perhaps the single most important ingredient in the educational process is the teacher. A teacher who is hostile to the emotions and strivings of children and does not have a faith in them will create an inhospitable environment for learning. On the other hand, one who understands and considers their wishes and actual needs can create an atmosphere of trust in which adult authority is accepted and learning can take place. It is almost impossible to evaluate the quality of a teaching staff, since their effect is long-term, and often the results are a very good--or very bad--teacher's efforts are not visible until years later. It would be as unfair to judge Lower East Side teachers by reading scores as it is to judge pupils' ability by them.

However, in the Board of Education's maddeningly complex system of licensing, it is questionable whether the search is for intelligent human beings sympathetic to children and aware of their needs, or for "respectable," middle-class types who have taken the proper courses, can wade through the required exams, and can be depended upon to transmit traditional values, whether or not this is what their students need or want.

New York City is the only city in the state that will not license teachers who are already certified by the state. It has its own series of examinations for a regular (rather than substitute) license, which is given over a two-year period. Candidates must be college graduates and must have a certain number of credits in education, which varies according to the need for teachers.

The city-wide teacher certification index, or the percentage of the school's staff holding regular licenses, is 75.0. In the Lower East Side it is 76.1 at the elementary level, 53.7 at the intermediate level, and 66.8 at the high school level. The low certification indices for Seward Park High School, and especially for Lower East Side junior high schools, suggest that staff are young and inexperienced. (This is not necessarily detrimental: youth certainly is not a handicap for a teacher of the young, and if inexperience is coupled with enthusiasm, imagination, and initiative it may well be a better recommendation than experience tinged with resignation or cynicism.)

Although the percentage of Negro, Oriental, and Spanish-speaking students reached 90 percent in 1968-69, the corresponding rate of non-white and/or Spanish-speaking teachers is probably only around 10 percent. This situation should

obviously be remedied.

Interviews with principals and teachers revealed serious gaps in communications between them and "headquarters." The proliferation of administrative forms to be filled out is a nightmare for many teachers, and takes up valuable time that would be better spent with the students. Much time is also spent in filling out forms for supplies and needed repairs. Books must be ordered one year in advance, a ridiculous procedure which not only limits curriculum flexibility but makes it virtually impossible for teachers to use current material.

One recent trend, the influx of young males who have chosen teaching as a means of avoiding the draft, has probably had a beneficial effect on education in the ghetto neighborhoods. A Board of Education official said recently that 15,000 of the system's 60,000 teachers were men under 26 who held occupational deferments. Many of these teachers are better educated, more alert, and more responsive to the needs of their minority group pupils than traditional teaching personnel--young women graduates of schools of education. The fact that there are now so many male teachers is salutary in an area where many youngsters grow up in female-headed households (23 percent on the Lower East Side).

Unfortunately, many of these young men may return to graduate school or to other professions once they reach the age of 26. Or, if the Administration abolishes occupational deferments as it proposes to do, the number of young male teachers will be seriously diminished. In either case, the Board of Education should make special efforts to keep these men in the schools. With the spirit and commitment that many of them have shown, they may be one of the brightest hopes for revitalizing and enhancing the teaching profession in New York City.

SCHOOL PARAPROFESSIONALS

Since the fall of 1967, paid lay assistants--paraprofessionals--have been working in the New York City schools providing valuable help in the classrooms and the community. Presently over 15,000 people, 95 percent Negro or Puerto Rican, work as classroom aides, clerical assistants, and supervisors of student activities. In the Lower East Side, an important part of their work is providing individual instruction to students who may have difficulty reading and writing English.

As most of the paraprofessionals live near the schools in which they work, they have helped improve communications between the school and the parents, an important task in a setting where there may often be mistrust and lack of understanding between school and community. The use of paraprofessionals is one of the more hopeful signs in a transformation that must take place: dissolution of the conditions that keep the school a separate experience, divorced from the life of the community.

A PROGRAM OF SCHOOL REFORM

Offering recommendations for something as pervasive and formative as education is one of the most difficult of all tasks. Since things have come to such an unfortunate pass on the Lower East Side, it is necessary to start from scratch, as it were, reverting to basic principles and goals, and keeping the needs of children uppermost in mind. In a neighborhood with all the tensions and hostilities of the Lower East Side, education should both liberate children from the restrictions of their surroundings, yet give them a sense of connection to society. Most important is instilling an intellectual and emotional confidence. Although the ways in which children learn are imperfectly understood, schools on the Lower East Side are generally not providing the kind of environment that is conducive to these processes.

On the Lower East Side as in most other places, education occurs at a physical and emotional distance from other events in the community. Schools are closed-off from most other activities in the city and produce a parallel disconnection in the student. Education is guarded and proffered by an institution which is rather resistant to change and is often more responsive to the imperatives of administrators, teachers, and elected officials than to the needs of children and parents.

At the minimum it would seem that education should take place in an atmosphere that extends into the community: into its families, livelihoods, groups and associations. The barriers that make the school an outside authority concerned with discipline, judgment, and standardization must be dissolved. Schools should be part of the lives of children, something that can make them capable and original instead of resentful and unsure. While recent concern in the schools has centered on administrative and organizational reforms, the interests of children and the creation of a setting for them seem to have been neglected.

Reports on two recent educational experiments on the Lower East Side clearly demonstrate that much can be done to make education more exciting and humane. The First Street School was a neighborhood school with four teachers, twenty-three children, no principal and no administrators. George Dennison, one of its teachers, has reported in his recent book, The Lives of Children, on how the school sought to create a free environment in which children and teachers responded to each other as humans, not as contenders. Children saw that adults could respect their wishes and that they could be considerate and just towards them. A natural authority replaced the usual discipline and hostility of student and teacher.

A more direct innovation that offers specific ideas for revising teaching, even within the present limitations, was recently tried by the poet, Kenneth Koch, in P.S. 61. He simply took a new and enthusiastic approach to teaching children to write poetry. His comments suggest the responsive connections that can be made between what are regarded as separate subjects:

"Writing poetry makes children feel happy, capable and creative. It makes them feel more open to understanding and appreciating what others have written (literature). It even makes them want to know how to spell and say things correctly (grammar). Once Mrs. Magnenil's students were excited about words they were dying to know how to spell them. Learning becomes part of an activity they enjoy...."

"The change in the children is the most evident, but the teachers have changed too. Once they saw what the children were doing, they became interested themselves. They have given their own poetry writing assignments, they put children's poems on bulletin boards along with their art work, and they have the children read their poems in class and in school assembly."

(New York Review of Books,
April 9, 1970)

As difficult as it is to get new schools built, physical improvement and replacement of the Lower East Side's obsolete and overcrowded educational facilities may well be the easiest part of the Herculean task of improving education. Scores of windowless, institutional-looking buildings and even well-designed programs for busing, pairing and reorganizing classes cannot compensate for a fundamentally inadequate and possibly harmful educational experience. At least one informed observer of the community's schools has commented that no school at all is better than a bad school. While this attitude is probably untenable in our organized urban society, its basic element of truth should not be lost.

Public education can be improved in New York without greatly increasing expenditures. "What is needed in New York City...is not merely money. It is imagination, leadership and the willingness to try new practices, not merely in a single school or class, but as bold changes affecting the lives of all pupils and teachers in the city." This point, from a 1962 report of the New York State Department of Education's Cooperative Review Board, cannot be emphasized too strongly.

With these considerations in mind some specific ways in which public school programs could be changed will be outlined.

The educational goals for the Lower East Side rest on a basic Deweyan principle: education is a process of growth and development that shapes and sustains powers that already exist when a child enters the school situation. Bad education, however, does not just leave a child unschooled. It can be deleterious to the extent of destroying the fundamental nature, the normal capability and inherent sociability and imagination of the child that usually develop before he enters school. The best methods for achieving the stated goals will be found only after much thought and painstaking experimentation. The suggestions included here might provide a starting point.

SIZE OF SCHOOLS

Although the building plan presented earlier is based on educational monoliths, the concept of smaller neighborhood schools deserves serious

consideration. The Board of Education's building policy as it affects the Lower East Side has been to replace two older buildings with one new one large enough to accommodate 1,000 to 1,200 students. The arguments in favor of larger schools are that they are less costly per pupil to build and operate than smaller schools, more easily administered, require fewer sites and less relocation, and therefore are an easier way of replacing obsolete schools. However, just because sites are hard to find on the Lower East Side and relocation is difficult, it might be advantageous to build smaller schools on available sites, or build them as part of new housing.

Smaller schools can also be sustained on educational and psychological grounds. Considering the psychological needs of the urban child who is so often overwhelmed by the crush of the city and its vast, impersonal mechanisms, the beneficial emotional value of the more comprehensible environment might outweigh the supposedly higher costs per student.

One of the important goals of a school in a poor neighborhood should be to reinforce the self-esteem of its students. As self-esteem can emerge better in a setting that the child can perceive and influence, smaller schools might well offer the desired flexible and reassuring atmosphere. In regard to cost, the experience of the First Street School in creating a productive and humane setting for a per student cost of \$850 a year might be one that could be emulated.

Of course this school did not have the corps of administrators and procedures that our educational bureaucracy seems to find so necessary and protective. This raises a vital and very tangled question. The proliferation of paper work, red tape, levels of clerical positions, complications of planning and procedures in the present Board of Education framework resemble a Lewis Carroll nightmare far more than a supposedly modern urban educational system. Nearly everyone who has been associated with the Board of Education in any capacity will invariably begin to recount his experiences by complaining of the impossibility of clear communication, of obtaining straight and direct answers on any issue, in fact of getting anything done without filling out interminable forms and finally getting lost in a maze of stupefying nonsense. The recent decade has seen the publication of at least half a dozen books by former teachers who in their despair have made comedy or tragedy of this situation, depending upon their temperament. Even the teachers' strike of 1968 was made unnecessarily difficult, not by the admittedly real substantial issues, but by the procedural complexities of settling any important differences.

It is recommended that a good place to start reform is in dismantling in a massive way the existing bureaucracy. As Dennison showed in his book, a school does not need administrators. All it needs are teachers and children. The added expense of smaller schools would no doubt be more than compensated by the money saved in eliminating so much bureaucratic waste. This problem, which is directly related to the size of public schools, leads directly to the next considerations, and will be elaborated upon there.

ORGANIZATIONAL REFORM:

In recent years, and especially in the last four years, efforts at educational reform have centered on procedural and managerial issues. The integration issue was debated largely in organizational terms (e.g., busing, pairing of schools), and the current controversy over community control and decentralization is being framed mainly as an organizational issue. Although reading scores continue to decline, questions of actual program and accomplishment in the public schools do not usually receive prime attention. Perhaps they are not soluble in a political situation that emphasizes schools rather than education.

The prevailing logic implies that organizational and educational changes must proceed together, or rather that managerial reforms will be the impetus and prerequisite for changes in curricula and teaching methods. Others believe that inspired new methods developed spontaneously in the classroom will be recognized by the system and incorporated into it. However, organizational reform simply does not take place; the bureaucracy has undergone very little change over a half-century. Therefore innovations in teaching and curricula must not wait for change from above, but must be attempted as far as possible within the system, while the system hopefully begins the dismantling discussed in the previous section. This will doubtless take some time. Meanwhile the initiative taken by those such as Kenneth Koch, Jonathan Kozol in Boston (for which he was fired) and several others must be widely imitated. There is no reason why a whole generation of children should suffer while the educational leviathan begins to stir itself.

It is abundantly clear at this time after the Bundy Report and such books as 110 Livingston Street that not only does the organization of the New York City school system militate against significant improvement of the educational experience, but also that the hierarchical Board of Education is isolated from the many communities whose educational destinies it controls. (The list of school replacement priorities for the Lower East Side, which bears little relationship to school conditions or population shifts, is ample evidence of this.) Infrequent public hearings, as the recent furor over the decentralization plan indicated, are not sufficient. The absence of available channels of responsibility and redress between the system and the public prevents parents from playing an effective role.

Only occasionally does community outcry bring results. This was the case with the decision to build P.S. 21, a school that had apparently not even been considered before local residents stated their demands to the Board of Estimate.

In general, the size and complexity of the system have weakened the ability of all concerned parties to act positively. Board programs are "experimental" or "demonstrations," often ineffective. Frustrated and angry parents expend their energy in actions directed at organizational and procedural decisions rather than seeking innovative programs and methods. District supervisors and administrators are compelled to interpret and defend policies they did not make and are largely unable to change. The result, as the Bundy Report so aptly noted, is the "preservation of negative power against a faceless system."

It must be understood from the outset that the

best possible reorganization can be no more than an enabling act. Other vital prerequisites are funds to improve the schools, a means of increasing the number of good teachers available, and programs to speed the eradication of the poverty to which so many urban school children return each evening.

Reorganization of the educational system on all levels to facilitate communication and cooperative action would enable the schools to play an effective role in the larger effort toward upgrading the area.

Redistricting

On the district level a reorganization is needed that will allow for diversity in student body composition. Districts must be small enough for the contact needed to devise appropriate programs for each neighborhood, while maintaining an overall sense of community.

Before the 1969 decentralization plan, the Lower East Side's 26 elementary, intermediate and junior high schools were divided among two regular districts and one demonstration district. District 1 included the 13 elementary schools and 3 middle schools located between Delancey and 14th Streets; four elementary schools and J.H.S. 56 were in District 3; the Two Bridges Demonstration District was made up of the four remaining elementary schools and J.H.S. 65.

Under the most recent Manhattan decentralization plan, all of the Lower East Side schools would be included in District 1, except for the Two Bridges schools and P.S. 23, which would become part of District 2. District 1 will be an exclusively Lower East Side district. District 2, however, will extend from the Battery to West 59th Street and East 100th Street.

The success of decentralization is related to the ability of the central Board of Education and top-level administrators to surrender some of their decision-making power. If the ability to devise significant programs were vested in local boards, curricula and projects could be more responsive to local needs.

The decentralization plan approved by the Board of Education does give some new rights to local boards. Each district will be headed by a locally-elected, nine-member board empowered to select district superintendents; determine curriculum in accordance with city and state standards; select textbooks from a centrally-approved list; and contract for school repair and maintenance up to \$250,000 annually.

As a whole, however, the decentralization plan leaves much to be desired. The local districts are still far too large. The bulk of financial control remains in the hands of the central Board of Education. Funds from state, Federal, and foundation sources must be channeled through the Board, and all budget items must be centrally approved. The local boards have no power with regard to local teaching and administrative staffs.

Furthermore, the size and location of the districts will tend to place a great deal of power in the hands of the white middle-class, except in areas, such as Harlem, where the non-whites and Puerto Ricans constitute a majority of the district's population. In a district as large and diverse as District 2, which now includes six Lower East Side schools, the poor Lower East Side parents are isolated from minority group parents on the west side and those living

in the east nineties. Lacking the funds and organizational base to wage effective campaigns, the poor will probably be outmaneuvered and under-represented on the district board.

All of the Lower East Side schools should have been included in a single district. By isolating these six schools (and P.S. 130) in a district with whose members they have no other shared community interests, the Board of Education plan will probably have the effect of cutting off that portion of the Lower East Side community from participation in its new district's decision-making activities. The new arrangement also eliminates the Two Bridges Demonstration District, and thus community participation in school activities will probably decrease in that portion of the Lower East Side rather than be stimulated, unless changes are made. These revisions could be made in 1971 and in succeeding odd years.

School-Community Committees

On the local level, the basically ineffectual Parent-Teacher Associations should be replaced with school-community committees. Recognizing the importance the principal has in determining the nature of the educational experience in a school, these committees should have, as their most important responsibility, the right to screen and interview candidates for the office of principal and to make recommendations on appointments to that position. The committee would also have the power to veto selections for sufficient cause. They might also have some rights in selection of teachers. Other functions of this committee would include curriculum review and supervision and administration of after-school and week end school programs.

Use of School Buildings

The use of school buildings throughout the country and even in urban areas, is still geared to a seasonal agrarian society--nine months a year and, at best, nine hours a day. In an urban situation, particularly in the ghetto area the school has the potential of being the place where the child can acquire the tools he needs to overcome his environment. The school should be open to the neighborhood and available to all groups for meetings, discussions, and the formation of new interests and associations.

Currently, objections to opening up the schools are usually based on the fear of misuse and wanton abuse. If the community feels that the school is truly a neighborhood place and not a symbol of alien authority it may help alter negative and destructive attitudes towards schools.

Temporary Rezoning

Rezoning within districts can be done on a temporary basis to reduce overcrowding and increase homogeneity. Some possible rezonings, which would immediately reduce the surplus load in the more overcrowded and/or obsolete buildings could be accomplished by shifting pupils from:

P.S. 122 to P.S. 19
P.S. 15 to P.S. 34
P.S. 20 to P.S. 63
P.S. 42 to P.S. 2
P.S. 1 to P.S. 126

There are an infinite number of ways to reform curriculum in the public schools, many of them well-documented in recent literature. A new book called Teaching As a Subversive Activity, by Postman and Weingarten, discusses the inquiry method, which has proven fruitful, especially with students who have not responded well to more traditional methods. Essentially, students study what they are most interested in learning, those subjects that arise out of their own questions about their world.

In the present situation, especially on the Lower East Side, some negative suggestions might be more pertinent. One is to do away with the rigid grade system. An ungraded program has been used on an experimental basis in P.S. 61 with about 180 six and seven-year-olds. The ungraded program is the closest public schools have been able to come to devising individualized programs tailored to each child's self-development, thought processes, and abilities. A child can progress at his own pace, spending more time on those subjects that interest him and less on what seems superfluous. An ungraded system, allowing children to move from one group to another according to their achievement levels, is widely used in the city's private schools; there is no good reason why it could not be more widespread on the Lower East Side.

At present public school children are required to submit several times a year to city-wide reading and mathematics achievement tests, whose major purpose is probably to secure the scores for statistical reports such as this one. It is difficult to see in what way the test or the preparation for it benefits the child. The Board of Education must consider eliminating these tests as far as possible, so that less time can be spent on teaching how to take the test and more time on educating the child. In line with this is a further suggestion that the present system of letter grades with report cards four times a year (requiring additional paper work for teachers and clerks) be reduced or abolished. Competition for grades is a very poor impetus for learning. Children who get poor grades develop the self-image of a "loser" and may be unnecessarily rooted in that category. There are surely better ways of informing interested parents about their children's progress; the time spent on filling out report cards might be better spent in brief periodic conversations with parents, or letters sent home on children's overall development.

Coordination of Programs

Many agencies on the Lower East Side in addition to the public schools offer instruction and many more provide activities for children. Mobilization for Youth, the settlement houses, and other places offer a wide range of attractions to young people. The schools should be fully open to and connected with these activities, such as music and theater at the Henry Street Settlement, instead of closed. One can envision an interchange of staff and students, and the extension of these resources to a much wider audience.

The Lower East Side has a rich educational and cultural inheritance built up over generations and through the efforts of many migrant groups. The five settlement houses, each with a varied and active program, exemplify this heritage. Today's migrants, both youngsters and adults, should be able to use these resources for personal and social fulfillment as their predecessors

were able to do.

Vocational Programs

Vocational schools are criticized on several grounds. First, that the curriculum and methods of many vocational schools are outmoded and on-the-job apprenticeship programs are insufficient. Secondly, segregating vocational students from others stigmatizes them. Furthermore, there is objection to the cutting-off of chances for further education that a vocational training implies. The Board's proposal for eradicating these problems is to incorporate present-day vocational and academic high schools into comprehensive schools. The Board's current concept is to provide only one trade course for each school.

Before the vocational program is cut back drastically, it should be emphasized that a good vocational track may offer more in the way of personal satisfaction and development than the general track. Manual work is unfashionable at the moment, but many people find carpentry or mechanics more satisfying and productive than routine office jobs. Furthermore, a good vocational program may open rather than preclude the possibility of further education, training, and advancement. New York City has many small shops, and trades that need a supply of young craftsmen if they are to survive in the contemporary commercial world. A work-study program that was based in the vocational schools but integrated with these commercial establishments might be attractive to many young people.

Language Skills

Unfamiliarity with the English language, particularly reading and writing, continues to be a problem in the Lower East Side schools. For this reason, the creation of bi-lingual schools in predominantly Spanish-speaking and Chinese-speaking neighborhoods would be very desirable. Half of the school day would be spent in instruction in the regular course of study in the native language. The other half of the day would be reserved for English instruction. In conjunction with this program, more Chinese and Spanish-speaking teachers should be hired. The Board of Education should grant special accreditation to Spanish and Chinese-speaking teachers who were trained and are qualified to teach in their native countries, but might not meet all of the New York City license requirements.

Or, as suggested earlier, children who understand little or no English might spend most of the school day on language for a period of months, so that when they do return to regular studies they are able to keep up with the class. Despite the gap, they would probably lose less than what they are spending a year or more trying to understand material taught in an incomprehensible tongue.

Tutoring Programs

Tutoring programs that use high school students have proven to be beneficial to both teachers and students. Programs such as the Title I homework-helper program should be expanded. In addition to improving reading skills, these programs provide needed employment for ghetto youngsters and help improve the identification with and respect for education. Tutoring projects should be undertaken on a much broader scale by the Board of Education and incorporated as a regular part of school programs.

RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS

As the foregoing discussions imply, the key to improving education on the Lower East Side is the teacher. While new schools and organizational reforms are imperative, and while the opportunities for parent participation should be enhanced, all of these improvements would be to no avail were there not a high caliber of teachers to bring the programs to life.

It is not generally recognized how great an effect teachers have on young people. Especially in the elementary grades, how much a teacher knows about history or mathematics is far less significant than what he is and what he does. Children learn by imitation and by observation. Teachers, in their every action, are setting an example for the young. This is why the influx of young male teachers has been such a good thing for ghetto schools. Even children who are slow learners and seem to have absorbed little of what was "taught" during the school year have usually come to know their teachers quite well; anyone who has heard youngsters discussing their teachers has been amazed at the high degree of psychological perception they possess.

It seems strange, then, that teaching as a profession is not given the respect it deserves, and is often chosen as a last resort by people who find no other compelling interests at college. Education courses such as they are now are commonly acknowledged by students to be among the least demanding, interesting, or relevant to later life.

With these elements in mind, the Board of Education's stress on the number of credits in certain subjects, on traces of dialect in speech, and the like, seems largely beside the point. It would be well if a whole new set of

criteria could be developed for the selection of teachers, criteria that would somehow result in the choice of men and women whose presence in a classroom can spur youngsters to a realization of what they can become.

The Board of Education must make the position of teacher in the public schools attractive enough to draw not the least but the most talented of each group of college graduates. This means not only more money, but the Board's confidence, expressed in its willingness to allow experimentation and imagination in the classroom, to permit latitude in the interpretation of the syllabus and choice of source materials, and to free teachers from the clerical drudgery that is not only time-consuming but professionally demoralizing.

The entire certification and licensing process should be reviewed and simplified. People of recognized talent with a specific contribution to make should be welcomed in the classroom, not submitted to a battery of qualifying examinations. The resources of parents, community people, local artists, and any interested persons willing to talk to children and share their skills must be drawn upon without the deadening red tape that characterizes the bureaucracy. There may be hundreds of artisans, artists, business people and other professionals who would be delighted at an invitation to visit the public schools, but at present shy away from the system's ominous reputation.

In short, a much broader, humanist view of hiring teachers and inviting outside resource people to participate in the public education process must be adopted. Only in this way will children realize that school is a place that has some relation to life outside, and thus is worth attending.

10. PUBLIC SERVICES

Many of the features commonly associated with slum communities are more the cumulative result of inadequate public services than specific conditions, such as poor housing or transportation. Thus, great gaps in municipal housekeeping or fears of crime that can profoundly distort the rhythm of the community may be more determinant of resident attitudes and the "quality of life" than standards of physical decay that are traditionally used to measure the ghetto situation.

Accordingly, this group of chapters delves into the more important factors shaping daily life on the Lower East Side. Liveability, health and schools were discussed in previous chapters. This chapter focuses on other public services that are vital to the community; seeking a sense of their adequacy, current problems and issues and recommendations for change. Parks and recreation, police and fire protection, social services, anti-poverty efforts, libraries and landmarks are among the specific topics discussed.

PARKS AND RECREATION

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Before enumerating the traditional kind of recreational facilities available to residents of the Lower East Side, it should be noted that, for a variety of reasons, recreation in this area takes place for the most part in places other than those so designated. The streets, squallid as most of them are, function as the favorite gathering place. Groups of young men tinkering with cars, elderly people and young mothers sitting in the sun, and children playing stick ball or hopscotch, are a vital part of the outdoor scene. Young children frequently play among garbage heaps on the streets or on glass-strewn vacant lots rather than scale the schoolyard gates to reach the protected and useless spaces within.

Storefronts house social clubs where men, almost exclusively, meet to talk, listen to music, drink, or play cards. Clusters of teen-aged boys gather around building entrances or walk,

while girls' groups are not often seen. Social groups also congregate around record shops, laundromats, and luncheonettes. Although on summer evenings and holidays there are the noise and bustle of a crowded neighborhood, generally a pervasive feeling of dullness, of nothing much happening and nowhere to go, prevails. This feeling may arise less from lack of facilities than from the predictability of many of the programs and the limitations on aspirations and prospects that are magnified in the drab physical surroundings.

In the ideal urban setting each piece of land devoted to public use has a particular purpose. The function of the school playground is to provide recreational space for students during and after school hours. A vest-pocket sitting area is intended for the use of the elderly or mothers with their infants. The reality on the Lower East Side bears little relationship to these distinctions. On the Lower East Side the street is often used as a sitting area, ball field, and traffic carrier; a small vest-pocket park within the block is often the focus of every kind of recreational activity from a boisterous basketball game to a quiet checker tournament. A study of open land spaces on the Lower East Side must, therefore, include not only parks, playgrounds and school yards, but must examine streets and avenues which, for the Lower East Side's children and adults, serve as nursery, after-school campus, summer camp, vacation resort; open space for all events.

Parks

The Lower East Side has one regional park, the East River Park; three community parks, Tompkins Square Park, Seward Park, and Columbus Park; and a variety of smaller street parks and avenue parkways that range from small vest-pocket parks to Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway. These parks are denoted on Map 10, Public Services.

East River Park is located on the edge of the Lower East Side, from Montgomery Street to East 12th Street along the FDR Drive. It is the largest park in Manhattan south of Central Park, and its 57 acres comprise more than one-half of the total park acreage of the community. The Park is 22 blocks long and three-quarters of a block wide. With the East River as a setting and more than ample open green spaces, the East River Park appears ideally suited for leisure-time activities in an urban setting.

The East River Park contains an outdoor and indoor basketball court, a track and field area, tennis courts, bicycle and jogging paths, numerous playgrounds for older children, a tots' play area, a dance area, an amphitheater, and an ample supply of benches and shade trees.

Poor maintenance does not alone explain the underuse of a park of such size and potential.

(See Chapter 13, Special Planning Studies, for a lengthy discussion of the problems of and suggestions for improving the East River Park.) One major reason is poor access. The Park is bounded by the FDR Drive and the East River. The entire eastern edge of the Drive along Avenue D and Columbia Street adjacent to the park is bounded by Jacob Rius, Lillian Wald, Baruch and Corlears Hook projects. These towers form a wall between residents in the old tenement buildings beyond and the park. In addition, the only clear path to the Park from the Drive is the overpass at Houston Street. Even the ramps, however, are barriers since they do not provide a direct route. Accidents have occurred on the Drive as children attempt to cross to avoid the circuitous routes of the ramps.

The isolated location of the park also deters visitors. Local residents are afraid to go to the park at night, and in the daytime it is often sparsely used.

Tompkins Square Park, between Avenues A and B from Seventh to Tenth Streets, and about ten acres in size, is a welcome feature in a very densely settled area. Facilities include basketball courts, a pavilion, paddle courts, a rarely-used bicycle oval, swings, children's slides, shelter for indoor games, a wading pool and checkers and chess tables. Maintenance is a major problem because of the intensive use of the park. Also, the recent influx of young hippies with bizarre forms of recreation has caused conflict between them and older users with more traditional pastimes.

Seward Park, covering three acres, is at the crossroads of Essex, Canal, and East Broadway. The Seward Park Houses form a massive background for the small-scaled park. The intermingling of the various ethnic resident groups adds to the park's vitality. It is well-maintained.

The design and layout of Seward Park illustrate the possibility of providing for active as well as quiet recreation within a limited space. Many mothers and elderly people use the park for sitting, talking, and playing cards. The younger children enjoy basketball, baseball, and playground equipment. This is a real community park, and is used heavily during the day and evening. The streets surrounding Seward Park are not main highways, and thus the park is easy to reach. Along with Corlears Hook and Columbus Parks, it is one of the most attractive parks on the Lower East Side.

Columbus Park is in the southwest section of Chinatown at Baxter, Mulberry, Bayard and Park Streets, just outside the boundaries of the study area. It covers approximately three acres. Like Seward Park, its small scale is accentuated by the tall structures surrounding it. It is a charming circular park with sitting areas, ball fields, and children's playground. There is a one-story building used for nursery-age programs and after-school teenagers' programs.

The design and layout of Columbus Park also encourage heavy use by all age groups. Children from the two neighboring schools use the park during recess. Often men from the nearby government buildings play basketball there during the lunch hour.

Corlears Hook Park is located at Jackson and Cherry Streets along the FDR Drive. This triangular-shaped park covers approximately four acres. Facilities include a baseball or

football area, swings, and other small children's play equipment, and sitting areas with ample shade trees and grass. A bridge connects the park to the rotunda in the East River Park.

Mothers and many elderly people use the park for chatting and resting. Its greatest use is on the fringes along Cherry Street. The children's play equipment is not used frequently because there are so many similar facilities in the surrounding projects.

Hamilton Fish Park and Pool, at East Houston and Pitt Streets, contains the Lower East Side's only outdoor pool and one of the City's largest and most attractive ones. The Park covers approximately four acres. There are two large pools, a building for showers and dressing, a wading pool, baseball area, benches, two picnic tables, and gymnastic equipment.

Accessibility is poor on all sides except Pitt Street, because of a four foot high wall with few openings that runs on the north, east, and south sides. As with Corlears Hook Park, duplication of facilities in nearby housing projects hampers full utilization of Hamilton Fish Park.

The Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway is a narrow strip of about nine acres running from Houston Street to the Manhattan Bridge, and divided into three sections by Delancey and Grand Streets. Land to the west, on Chrystie Street, is used for light industry and includes scattered hotels and rooming houses. Facilities include a baseball field and basketball courts, small children's play areas, and sitting areas. In the section toward the east, where there are often derelicts, the walkways are broken and litter is strewn about; the section nearest the Manhattan Bridge is better maintained, although even here the court surfaces are broken and uneven.

Many areas of the park are not used at all, and in general its usefulness is limited. Chapter 3 outlines a proposal for using the Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway for new housing and replacing the park land in a better location.

Vest-Pocket Parks and Sitting Areas

Several vest-pocket parks have been set up, with varying degrees of success. One is on East Second Street, extending through to Houston Street. This extension through the block permits much-needed light to enter the narrow site and allows for passage through the block. Noise is minimal. So far no playground equipment has been installed. However, neighborhood children have set up their own basketball rim and lighting. Smaller children use the area to play tag and stick ball.

Another is on Fifth Street, on a 25 by 100 foot lot, bounded on three sides by old law tenements. Existing playground equipment includes a steel jungle gym, sandbox and benches for adults near the entrance. Most of the facilities are for younger children, who use the park extensively. Adults and teenagers find it a quiet place to talk and relax. A major deficiency here is the lack of lighting, but this does not appear to have discouraged use of the area to any great extent.

Although the idea behind vest-pocket parks is admirable, in practice there have been serious failures to their success. Maintenance of such small lots at once expensive and hard to administer, while accommodating a variety of planned and unintended activities has also proven difficult. It would seem that such parks work

best if they are part of some more inclusive scheme for neighborhood recreation, if the need for special maintenance is recognized, and sites are carefully chosen with a view to location, activities, and utility.

The Allen Street Mall runs from Cherry Street through to East Houston in the center of Allen and Pike Streets. It covers a little more than an acre and is about 20 feet wide. Maintenance is poor and the area is littered with old newspapers, rubbish, and bottles. Use of the Mall varies considerably, on many days it is almost deserted, while on hot summer nights people seeking some relief from the oppressive tenements fill every bench.

Several triangular parcels of land along Houston Street, at the base of Avenue C and First Avenue are arranged as sitting areas. Although located in a dense section of the Lower East Side, these spaces, not much more than small, poorly maintained traffic islands with benches, are not too inviting. People want places where they can sit and watch the passing scene, but not on an isolated island prey to the noise and fumes of traffic.

In contrast to these empty islands, Peretz Square, at First and East Houston Streets, is a much more inviting place. Although less than half an acre, it occupies the end of a residential block and offers a variety of attractions for different groups. Most notably, it is a gathering place for bocce players. This Italian bowling game attracts large crowds of active participants and spectators. The area is maintained jointly by the bocce players and the Parks Department. Handball courts and groups of benches, not simply long rows, complete the facilities in Peretz Square.

Housing Project Recreation Space

The recreation areas within housing projects make a substantial contribution to the open space on the Lower East Side. In many instances residents prefer the projects' facilities to the nearby park areas. They are often better maintained and have play equipment and sitting areas. Parents can let children play there without fear for their safety.

The adventure playground, mall, arcade and theater at Jacob Rills Houses (E. 6th to E. 12th Streets, Avenue D and the FDR Drive) has become a nationally known architectural achievement. A beautifully designed area with imaginative, inviting play equipment, it is crowded at all times, not only with local residents, but with people and their children from all over the city. It has also become a pilgrimage place for visiting architects and planners. The Rills play area is a good example of the results of time, money, and skill spent on planning enjoyable recreation space. The results are even more striking compared to the lawn and barren open areas that it replaced. The vitality and exuberance found in the Rills playground are in sharp contrast to the emptiness and desolation of other, far less appealing recreation spaces.

There are attractive and well-composed open land spaces at Vlodeck Houses, a large pre-war project at Water, Jackson, and Henry Streets. The mall, outlined by trees, runs directly to the commercial area and has benches and play spaces for small children.

On the negative side, projects such as Baruch and Wald Houses have no malls, but are instead labyrinths of paths and unarticulated, undifferentiated spaces. These projects, together

with Rutgers Houses, also use about 20 percent of the land for on-grade parking. The malls of Rutgers, as well as of LaGuardia Houses, have only fenced-in grass plots, a few benches, and the predictable quota of steel turtles for children.

Other Outdoor Recreation

In other forms of outdoor recreation, the Lower East Side seems deficient not so much in quantity as in quality and variety. For example, while there are many school playgrounds, they are perhaps the least used parcels of land in the area. They have a potentially important role in the community, but fall far short of fulfilling it. Most of the playgrounds have no benches or trees, little equipment, and are poorly maintained. Moreover, they are inaccessible, since their steel fences have few or no openings apart from those leading directly into the school. The fences are locked during parts of the day and during the evening.

According to a report by the Community Council of Greater New York, the Lower East Side has 37 public playgrounds and 17 playing-fields, which is above the city average for comparable communities. Close to 12,000 youngsters use these spaces daily. As indicated on the Public Services Map (Map 10), the Lower East Side has one permanent outdoor swimming pool (Hamilton Fish). During the summer several temporary "mini-pools" are installed in order to, in the words of one city official, "allow youngsters to cool off right in their own neighborhoods."

As noted above, the streets are a vital part of Lower East Side life. Some major streets have significance not only for local people, but New Yorkers from other neighborhoods as well: Essex Street, with its large delicatessens, appetizer and food stores, and yarn goods supermarkets, is widely known; Orchard Street, New York's most active bargaining street, is famous for dry-goods, and is thronged on Sundays. Other streets, the local side streets, are important only to their residents, as extended "living-rooms" to supplement their crowded quarters. Most of the apartments in these tenements receive only dim light and stagnant air from air shafts and light wells. Only the front apartments face on the street and receive direct light and air. Consequently, in warm weather, people seek relief from the confines and shadows of their apartments on the fire-escapes, stoops, and streets. A young VISTA volunteer who lived in the area for several years described the life of the streets as follows:

"The doors of the Spanish clubs, grocery stores, church storefronts, are open and life flows within flows out. In the warmer weather groups of men gather around the club to drink; juke boxes blare out, mingling with the distant echoes of a church choir rehearsal. Older teens gather around an abandoned car and smoke; the younger children chase each other around; mothers sit on folding chairs or garbage cans, holding babies and keeping an eye on older children. Cars double park up and down the narrow streets and avenues.

"The audience, as they enjoy their recreational pursuits, also take part in the play being performed around them on the avenues--the police and firemen rushing to calls, the trucking activity for warehouses and provision companies, plumbing and heating firms, small factories, buses...."

Indoor Recreation

The Lower East Side has seven gymnasiums, two indoor swimming pools, and eight auditoriums or meeting-places. There are five after-school centers, attended by about 1,500 children during the day and approximately the same number of teen-agers in the evening. (For additional recreational and cultural programs, see the section in this chapter on Settlement Houses.)

The area also has seven evening community centers and eight adult education centers in the public schools, in which the Office of Continuing Education of the Board of Education offers a variety of educational programs for all age groups. Most of the participants are Puerto Rican, black, or Chinese; others include company groups for athletics, and church groups and businessmen. The users are largely in the low to moderate-income groups. At some centers, play groups and kindergartens have been set up. Other programs for children include creative arts, puppetry, theatre, sports, and music. Teen-agers have the same programs available. In addition to activities such as fencing, weight-lifting, tumbling, basketball, volleyball, and swimming. Adult programs include dancing, painting, drama, typing, English, art and sports. The Bureau hopes to expand the program, and to develop new activities in conjunction with the needs and wishes of the participants.

The area also has several Boys Clubs offering sports, arts and crafts, athletic and educational programs.

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The minimum ideal standard for open space in high density areas is one acre per 500 persons. On this basis the Lower East Side should have about 375 acres of open space. Obviously, approaching this standard is impossible in a compact, settled community like this one. However, only 8.5 percent, or 87 acres, of the Lower East Side's gross land area is devoted to parks and outdoor recreation--below average for the city and far below national standards. It is only in number of playgrounds that the community is not below the city's average; and in these, ironically, neglect, dullness, and a general uninviting atmosphere deter enthusiastic play.

In short, by any reasonable standards, there is not enough park and recreation space on the Lower East Side. What exists is frequently poorly maintained and verging on an advanced state of decay. Playgrounds are similar in the standard activities they offer, and in the barrenness of their design; also, they are often located in such a way as to be redundant. Jacob Riis Plaza offers an idea of the kind of varied and unique activities that a diverse urban population needs and enjoys.

Moreover, park space is not equitably distributed in regard to the concentrations of population. The two larger parks--East River and Sara D. Roosevelt--are at the margins of the community, and do not provide the space in the denser sections where it is needed. Conversely, great grey stretches of tenement housing stand on crowded blocks without the relief of a stretch of grass, trees, or at least empty space. East River Park, the largest in the community, is inaccessible to large numbers of people, because of the paucity of ramps and the barrier of the FDR Expressway. Fear also keeps people away from East River Park and Tompkins Square, especially in the evening hours.

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What I must hedge in the field of recreation is more space. It is proposed that much park space be created by a phased rebuilding process, and as part of the general development plan. For example, the discussion of the nine block project area in Chapter 3 demonstrates how unused and in be absorbed for building sites and then re-distributed in more convenient and usable sites throughout the community. Similarly, Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway can be used for planned building and re-allocated in a more useful form during renewal of the tenement block.

Redevelopment of the Lower East Side should include the introduction of a range of outdoor and play areas from small block sitting areas and playgrounds for mothers with children, or elderly people, to a redesigned and attractive East River Park. (See Chapter 13, with a detailed plan for a new East River Park. A prerequisite for park renewal is a series of new crossings at strategic points that relate well to the street system and the park itself.) Recreation space should be allotted where people naturally tend to congregate, rather than in an arbitrary pattern, or in the land "left over" after buildings are sited. Supervision, attractive equipment and sitting areas should be provided in existing spaces such as school playgrounds and play streets, so that they serve fully for many types of users.

As noted in Chapter 3, the closure of many streets presents a singular opportunity for augmenting the quantity and variety of open space on the Lower East Side. Sitting places, active game areas, plazas and fountains, places where men can tinker with cars, or places for public services, are some of the items that could take place on streets that are relieved of their burden as thoroughfares.

The importance of the street as a diverse gathering place must be remembered and respected. Space, both indoor and outdoor, for spontaneous gatherings or social clubs is a necessity in this crowded neighborhood. The institution of the Puerto Rican social club for men is a traditional part of neighborhood life; proper space should be available for this. In a recent walking tour of several blocks it was noted that approximately one out of ten tenement storefronts is used, more or less spontaneously, by the community. In this small area there were no less than ten clubs, in addition to community centers and churches.

Such modest changes as these--closing streets for the types of activities noted above, locating small, attractive, and well-kept parks where people gather, and even brightening the area with colorful wall murals--could help make the Lower East Side a more satisfying place to live.

Indoor recreation space for teen-agers and elderly people is also in short supply. More pools and gymnasiums for youngsters would be welcome, as well as quiet, pleasant places for older people to sit and talk. Full use of public schools, a additional space for settlement houses and clubs so that programs could expand, are further necessities.

Essential to the success of park renewal is proper upkeep. If a park continually has broken or drag equipment, it will soon fall into disuse. New administrative procedures, and, if necessary, new institutional forms, should be established to manage and attend to maintenance and development. Special inspections should ensure that recreational areas are kept attractive. Perhaps maintenance could be handled on a community basis, with a corps of local

youngsters to help carry out the work and inspection. A final important measure is enough floodlighting to make the parks safe in the evening; activities, entrances, and paths should be designed for both safety and appeal.

POLICE PROTECTION

SURVIVING ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE

In 1968, over 18,000 crimes were reported to the three police precincts (the Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth) that serve the Lower East Side. Of these, 42 were murders, 1,258 assaults, 2,337 robberies, and 8,127 burglaries. Obviously crimes against property are the primary threat. In light of such figures, it is not surprising that safety is the major concern of a large number of the area's citizens. It is not an exaggeration to say that the one element that might make life on the Lower East Side more tolerable would be freedom from fear and a sense of personal safety.

Unfortunately, a poor area such as this one produces not only the criminals, but their victims. High crime areas are usually those characterized by the poorest housing conditions and inhabited by minority groups with the lowest incomes. Generally police officials interviewed believed that crime within public housing projects was committed by residents rather than outsiders, while crimes in adjacent middle-income developments were almost always committed by outsiders. Furthermore, the officers could not emphasize too strongly the role of narcotics addicts in producing such a high crime rate. The addicts bred in and by the slums (see the discussion of addiction in the chapter on Health and Medical Services) regularly prey upon their neighbors for the money to support their habit. The irrational nature of this kind of crime makes it difficult to predict areas affected, or crime waves, and almost impossible to forestall or defer.

Thus the poor are the most vulnerable to crime, and consequently attach great importance to better police protection. Low and middle-income projects, which are comparatively more affluent than the tenements, frequently become targets of the petty criminal. Muggings and purse-snatchings in the projects or in the halls and elevators are common. The victims are often women and old people, who are unable to defend themselves. At least one of the police officials interviewed criticized the layout of the projects, which as a rule are tall, dark, poorly illuminated, and have no outside walkways, offer the criminal many possible escape routes, and many escape routes. The projects are frequently poor, and the police's effectiveness is impeded.

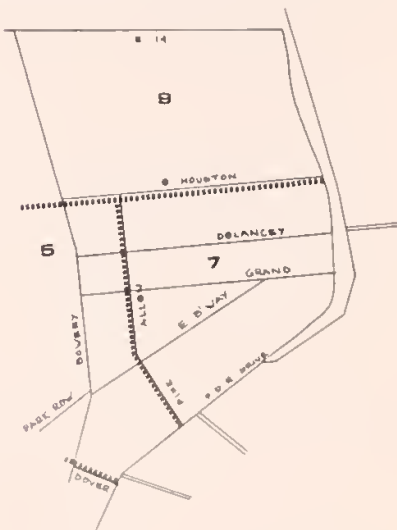
Until and unless projects are improved, the social and economic conditions that create

mine the destinies of the Lower East Side's residents, it is unlikely that there will be any significant lessening of the high crime rate or of the resulting fear in the people. The problem

is complex and involves measures far more wide-reaching than deploying more police or improving the quality of law enforcement (although these measures are certainly recommended). In a sense the most pertinent suggestions to reduce crime are offered in the other chapters of this report that deal with dreadful housing, poor schools, unemployment, narcotics addiction, and inadequate health care. The present section will outline some of the basic facts of crime and police services on the Lower East Side.

POLICE PRECINCTS AND INCIDENCE OF CRIME

The Lower East Side is served by the Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth Precincts, whose areas are indicated on the accompanying sketch. For all the precincts, housing projects, particularly low-income and those in the poorest sections, are the heaviest victims. Other prime targets are the Bowery derelicts, who are for the most part defenseless, the business districts (Grand Street textiles, the Canal Street Jewelry Exchange, and loft buildings unoccupied on week ends), and users of the nearly empty East River Park. The Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (Seventh Precinct) has tended to become a breeding place for crime, with vacant tenements providing hiding places for the criminals. However, as demolition proceeds the problem diminishes. Vandolism in parks, churches, synagogues, and housing under construction is another serious problem. Finally, tensions between ethnic groups such as the Chinese and Italians in their overlapping areas, or between hipsters, Puerto Ricans, and older Slavic groups in the Tompkins Square area, or clashes between local residents and "outsiders" in Hamilton Fish Park, frequently breed crime.



The crime rate on the Lower East Side is rising each year; between 1967 and 1968 it rose by about 7 percent. Table 37 gives the 1968 crime rates for the three precincts compared to other New York precincts with similar problems. It is evident that in every reported category, the Ninth Precinct leads the Fifth and Seventh Precincts. In fact the Ninth Precinct ranks thirteenth in terms of the total number of crimes of the 78 precincts in the City of New York. According to the 1960 census the population of the Ninth Precinct was 81,947 compared to 80,126 for the Seventh and 53,810 for the Fifth.

Although the populations of the Ninth and Seventh Precincts are approximately equal, there is a substantial disparity in the crime rates between the two. This may be explained partly by the extreme concentration of overcrowded tenements and generally blighted housing conditions in the Ninth Precinct. The heaviest concentration of crime occurs in precisely those areas in the Ninth Precinct with the highest degree of overcrowding and the poorest housing conditions, namely, along Avenues C and D. The Seventh Precinct, in contrast, has a greater proportion of middle and low-income projects. This may indicate that there are fewer "breeding areas" for crime in the Seventh than in the Ninth. It also indicates the role which environmental conditions play in generating criminal activity. This is not to say, however, that the physical surroundings are the key; they are only one element in the chain that produces criminal behavior. As in the Fifth and Seventh, narcotics are cited as the chief cause of crime in the Ninth Precinct. Community relations in the Ninth, while difficult because of the multiplicity of groups, have been skillfully handled and have received national attention. Nevertheless, the atmosphere continues to be regarded as explosive.

The locations and conditions of the buildings presently housing the three precincts are generally not as good as they might be. The Fifth Precinct stationhouse, at 19 Elizabeth Street, although considered to be advantageously situated,

is old and inadequate by present standards. A proposal to abolish the Fifth and combine it with another precinct met with strong community opposition and has since been abandoned. There are, however, no plans to rehabilitate the structure or to move the stationhouse.

The Seventh Precinct stationhouse at Clinton and Delancey Streets will be relocated because of the Seaward Park Extension Urban Renewal Project. The new facility will be combined with a firehouse, which is also being relocated. However, the new location in the vicinity of Broome and Pitt Streets was thought to be less central and therefore less desirable than the present site.

The location of the Ninth Precinct stationhouse (1321 East Fifth Street) was considered by the officers to be a disadvantage. It was generally felt that it could be more centrally located to be more accessible to members of the community. The physical plant is in need of modernization for increased efficiency and improved morale. Since most of the men in the Ninth are motorized, there is a shortage of foot patrolmen, which is usually alleviated by contingents from the Special Events Squad during the daylight hours and the Tactical Patrol Force at night. The frequent presence of the TPF in the Seventh Precinct as well during the summer months seems to suggest a shortage of available manpower.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following suggestions for tenant safety are not new or startling but have been found effective. In the housing projects, tenants should organize to combat crime, and assign building and lobby patrol groups for as many hours of the day and night as possible. Individuals, of course, should be warned against entering elevators with strangers, and should notice and report strangers loitering in lobbies, courtyards, or hallways. As mentioned earlier, the layout, landscaping, and lighting of the projects to im-

TABLE 36
Selected Crime Rates for the Lower East Side
and Three Other Precincts, 1968(a)

Crime	Precinct				Seventy-Ninth (c)	One Hundred Twelfth (d)
	Fifth	Seventh	Ninth	Twentieth (b)		
Murder	28	13	21	16	31	2
Rape	13	18	89	45	37	5
Robbery	628	863	1,633	1,373	978	111
Felonious Assault	494	425	810	470	881	31
Burglary	2,529	2,243	6,189	4,228	2,640	284
Grand Larceny	1,939	2,031	2,953	3,823	862	460
Auto Theft	778	418	964	772	358	1,612
Total	6,398	6,011	12,659	10,727	6,207	4,525

(a) Based on rates for 100,000 population as reported in the 1960 Census.

(b) West Side of Manhattan

(c) Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn

(d) Maspeth, Rego Park, Forest Hills in Queens

Source: New York City Police Department Press Release No. 4, February 24, 1969

litate crime and escape. Better lighting around buildings can be installed easily and immediately. Future projects should be designed to offer longer views and paths, and fewer clumps of bushes and shrubs behind which criminals can hide. Building design should minimize entrances and internal courts, and have doorways in full view.

Since over half of the Lower East Side residents live in the tenements, immediate security measures should be enforced there to minimize danger. Locked front doors and buzzer systems in good working order should be mandatory, as should securely locked mailboxes. Installation of a fire door at roofs, and of the new, approved gates on rear fire-escape windows should also be permitted.

On the other side, the police should do even more than they are at present to foster good community relations, not only between patrolmen and citizens, but among the various ethnic groups. They might aid residents to set up auxiliary civilian police forces to protect small areas. More foot patrolmen—as well as Housing Authority police—should be visible on the streets as a deterrent to criminals and to give residents more confidence. More call boxes should be placed on streets and in parks, while the response to calls could be more rapid and efficient. As has been suggested elsewhere, civilians should handle as many police jobs as possible—clerical and desk jobs, record-keeping, traffic and parking violations, and school crossings—to free trained and skilled policemen for more urgent work on the streets. Similar measures should be taken to free policemen from time-consuming court appearances.

It is widely recognized that the present court and punitive systems do little to decrease crime, and often return offenders to the streets as prone to crime as before, if not more so. Defendants often wait in jail for months before their cases are called; the backing and crowding of cases on the calendars have become legendary. The courts, for lack of space and manpower, are simply unable to cope with the volume of cases, and function by frequent adjournments, plea bargaining, and releasing guilty defendants, who then return to their neighborhoods. The 1969 Clark Report commissioned by the city's Criminal Justice Information Bureau concludes that the system needs a "thoroughgoing revision of court operating procedures, with an emphasis on careful control of calendars, improved communications with parties, and coordination of party appearances." Moreover, it is well-known that the prisons and reformatories to which convicted offenders go are nightmarish places, which succeed far more often in producing hardened criminals than in diverting criminal impulses.

The changes necessary to reduce crime on the Lower East Side and the city as a whole are vast and threefold: social and economic changes that bring fruitful alternatives to a life of poverty, crime, and drug addiction; an overhauled court system that administers justice speedily; and a rehabilitative penal system that offers not brutal custody but psychological and vocational therapy designed to alter the course of the prisoners' future lives, and thus indirectly, of their neighbors'. None of these changes is easy, but the attack on crime must be mounted in this way, at its root, rather than with superficial, stop-gap measures that barely treat the symptoms and ignore the disease.

FIRE PROTECTION

FACILITIES

The New York City Fire Department has several fire houses within the boundaries of the Lower East Side (as shown on Map 10, Public Services), which is generally served by the Fourth Battalion. The Department has developed a system whereby three firehouses are assigned to each call box. When an alarm is received the dispatcher assigns that fire house which has the shortest route and is not on a call. The Department aims at having its equipment on the scene of any fire within three minutes of the alarm.

Fire Department officials interviewed indicated that existing facilities are generally adequate for the demands which are currently placed on them. However, within the next ten years several new firehouses will be built to serve the growing population and replace old structures. A new fire house will be located in the vicinity of Broome and Pitt Streets to replace the existing one at 185 Broome Street, which will be demolished because of the Seward Park Urban Renewal Project. The Department regrets the necessity of demolishing the existing structure since it is adequate for present needs and has only recently been rehabilitated.

In addition, the Department is planning the construction of three new fire houses. The first (F-67) would be a replacement for the existing facility at 108 East 13th Street, to be constructed in the vicinity of First and Third Avenues, East 13th and 15th Streets. The Department does not plan to seek construction funds until 1975. The second project (F-138) would be a replacement for the existing fire house at 42-44 Great Jones Street, to be located in the vicinity of Chrystie, Mott, Spring, and Grand Streets. Construction funds will be requested for 1975. The third project (F-161) would be a replacement for the existing fire house at 363 Broome Street, and will be located in the vicinity of Astor Place and East 2nd Street-Bond Street. The Department considers this last facility to be a priority item and plans to request funds for 1970-71.

While the character of the Lower East Side does present some special problems in terms of fire fighting and prevention, Department officials said that the Lower East Side was not considered an especially troublesome section of the city. False alarms were not seen to be a special problem; in fact, their rate was declining. Assaults on firemen are infrequent, although the Department as a preventive measure has provided some of its equipment with protective shelters. The incidence of fires, both of common and suspicious origin, was not considered to be abnormal, although it is rapidly increasing as it is in all sections of the city. For example, the fire house at 108 East 13th Street responded to 950 calls in 1960 and by 1968 this number had increased to 1917 calls.

The following Table shows the total number of fire responses by Lower East Side Engine and Ladder Companies during 1967 and 1968. Engine Company 28 and Ladder Company 11 (at 222 East 2nd Street) and Ladder Company 18 (at 185 Broome Street) are ranked among the 25 companies

In the City having made the greatest number of total responses in 1968.

TABLE 37

Fire Department Activity, 1967 and 1968

<u>Total Fire Responses</u>		
<u>Engine Company</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>
5	869	1,175
9	434	603
15	689	788
17	1,164	1,358
28	2,628	3,565
33	638	922
55	724	944
<u>Totals</u>	<u>7,146</u>	<u>9,355</u>
<u>Ladder Company</u>		
3	934	1,195
6	1,088	1,368
9	833	1,080
11	2,523	3,461
18	1,163	1,450
<u>Totals</u>	<u>6,541</u>	<u>8,554</u>

Source: N.Y.C. Fire Department

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

The Department recognizes two kinds of fires, structural and non-structural. The first is a building fire, and the second a fire outside a building, such as an automobile fire, street fire, or rubbish fire in a yard. Structural fires tend to peak during the spring and decline to a low point during the summer, then rise again during September and level off for the balance of the year. Non-structural fires, on the other hand, rise substantially during the spring and summer months, and fall markedly from September on.

Tenement housing, such as that which predominates on the Lower East Side, does present a number of special problems in terms of fire prevention and control. The high density encountered in tenement buildings alone increases the loss of life. The proximity of the buildings and the high internal densities enable fires to spread to adjacent structures as well as from apartment to apartment. Frequently light shaft windows are broken and the fire's passage to an adjacent building is facilitated. The shafts also provide ventilation for a fire analogous to a chimney.

The chances for loss of life are increased because tenants, especially those of Puerto Rican extraction who are not accustomed to the colder climate, often seek to seal the apartment to eliminate drafts. Firemen frequently encounter

apartments in which all windows have been completely sealed with tape. This practice becomes doubly hazardous when the tenant uses a gas, water or space heater, which can consume all of the available oxygen in the room and cause death by suffocation to sleeping residents. Similarly, fire will consume the oxygen with the same result.

Tenement buildings are also more open to the outside, enabling vandals and others to gain access. The danger of aidental or intentional fires is heightened. Access for fire fighting is generally better than in other type of buildings. Problems are frequently encountered, however, when residents have installed a number of locks on their doors.

Vacant buildings are a serious problem for the Fire Department. Once the building becomes vacant they are the targets for vandals. Fires frequently occur, and because of the factors mentioned above, the danger if the fire spreading to adjacent occupied buildings is great.

Although it is difficult to establish the exact cause of a fire once it has been burning for any period of time, it was said that careless smoking is the predominant cause of fire on the Lower East Side. Fires caused by faulty electrical wiring and by children or vandals run a close second. The cause of electrical fires is generally attributed to wiring which in most of the tenements is inadequate by present standards. The increasing use of electrical appliances causes overloading of the system. In addition, residents become annoyed with frequent overloads and bypass the fuses, thereby creating additional fire hazards.

Inadequate trash removal not only causes environmental problems but is also a cause of some fires. Frequently buildings do not have a sufficient number of cans, or if they do, they rarely have adequate space to store them. Superintendents care not for one but for three or four buildings and do so inadequately. The tenements are not suited for the number of people who occupy them and the trash generated exceeds the capacity of the building to handle it.

The trend reflected by the figures above has been a continuing one and shows no sign of reversing itself. The Department is currently engaged in an extensive community relations and education program aimed at informing adults and especially children about the causes and prevention of fire. While this effort will be helpful, it will not be decisive. Increased inspection by the Fire Department and the Department of Buildings would aid in locating potential fire hazards and enabling preventive measures to be taken. The realities of the situation, however, show this also to be a rather futile course of action. Visual inspection shows that a substantial proportion of the Lower East Side is a potential fire trap. Again, the legacy of the past in the form of unsatisfactory tenements haunts and destroys the lives of the present occupants. Until the real causes of fire in this area—both physical and sociological—are treated by broad level attention and renovation on the city sound solution, it can be called a solution, is a greater commitment in terms of men and equipment.

SETTLEMENT HOUSES

Five major settlement houses serve the Lower East Side community, all providing a wide range of social and educational programs. They are Hamilton-Madison House, the Grand Street Settlement, Henry Street Settlement, the University Settlement, and the Educational Alliance. They are a unique and important resource, serving a combined total of about 50,000 people on a regular basis annually. Originally founded in the latter part of the nineteenth or beginning of the twentieth century, during the heavy waves of immigration, the settlement houses were a major force in assimilating newcomers to their environment and culture, with literacy programs, workshops, health and child care centers. As one of the major philanthropic efforts of the time, the settlement houses served primarily a Jewish first and second generation population, and in fact several of the houses still are run predominantly by Jewish Boards of Directors, although their clientele has changed.

The settlement houses continue to serve the needs of newcomers, though the newcomers today are not from overseas (except in the case of the Chinese), and may remain in the area longer than their predecessors. Instead of the Jewish, German, and Irish clientele, the overwhelming majority of settlement house clients are now Puerto Rican, with significant minorities of black and Chinese people as well. Ethnic group use of the settlement house facilities varies with age: for example, at the Grand Street settlement Jewish people almost exclusively use the services for the aged, while programs for the young cater to Puerto Ricans and blacks. Again, at Hamilton-Madison House, 80 percent of the people in the Golden Age Club are Chinese men, while Puerto Ricans are the majority in teen and young adult programs. By and large the great majority of the clientele are in the low-income groups; the small minority of moderate-income people usually participate in programs of cultural rather than social improvement. Most of the clientele comes from the immediate local area near the house.

Except for one or two satellite programs, there are no settlement house activities above Houston Street. In order to serve both the older and newer populations in this area the churches with ethnic group worshippers and other local institutions should devote considerable efforts to devising and financing programs.

Generally the settlement houses are concerned with pressing social issues such as welfare, health care, the special problems of teen-agers and old people, nursery programs, employment, drugs, family counseling, and the like. While they do not take political stands or assume leadership, they encourage group action and urge groups to meet to formulate their needs and plans for action on local matters. Much of the staff at the houses is volunteer, and dedicated to ameliorating the lives of their clients.

In the future the settlement houses on the whole anticipate that their programs will continue and expand, with some more stress, possibly, on early child care. There is a general trend toward community participation on the Boards of Directors, varying in degree with each settle-

ment house. While this is a very desirable trend for the community, it should be balanced with the consideration that all the houses depend on private funds, raised primarily by board members with access to the sources of such outside funds. Boards composed completely of local members might cut off an important channel of financing.

The settlement houses have designed and will continue to design their programs to suit the needs of a changing population. Plans for the future might include exploration of the ways the settlement house programs could be incorporated into a general educational-service structure on the Lower East Side. This type of inter-institutional cooperation would help all programs cut across age, ethnic, and neighborhood boundaries, and effect changes in issues that are not only vital but long-range, such as consumer affairs, voter registration, and cultural enrichment of the opportunities of the new minority groups.

UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENT

The University Settlement (184 Eldridge Street), founded in 1886, is the oldest establishment of its kind in the country. At its inception it served a Jewish and Irish population; now over ninety percent of its clients are Puerto Rican. About five or six thousand people are served annually, coming from an area which suffers from high rates of deteriorated housing, drug addiction and delinquency, and broken families.

The programs include a planned parenthood clinic, senior citizens' activities, and day care and Headstart. The settlement also sponsors a camp and film club, as well as electronics programs, physical activities, cultural arts, and other educational programs. The Action for Progress program offers services in the areas of employment and drug addiction, a thrift shop, and community development center. Other political action programs are devoted to welfare rights, housing, and voter registration.

Although the local, state, and Federal governments finance parts of the University Settlement, the basic source of funds is private donations. Annual operating expenses are about \$1.5 million a year. A large part of the Board of Directors is composed of people who were once settlement clients and have since become affluent and have access to financial resources. About ten percent of the Board are current clients, representing the needs and wishes of the community. The staff, numbering some 150 persons, are paid and volunteer, full and part-time professionals and paraprofessionals.

GRAND STREET SETTLEMENT

Almost all of the clients served by the Grand Street Settlement (283 Rivington Street) are low-income residents in the Baruch-Gompers housing project. Most of the clients are Puerto Rican, a large minority are black, and about ten percent are whites of assorted nationalities. The services for the aged are used almost completely by Jewish people who have been in the area for 40 or 50 years or more. Between 10,000 and 15,000 people a year are served by the settlement.

Over the past years, in view of the problems of the community, the Grand Street Settlement

has shifted its emphasis from arts and crafts and education programs to social services. Many of the programs offer counseling in school, health, housing, welfare, and employment problems. Senior citizens' programs are offered, as well as help for children in the form of tutoring, day care, and Headstart. Additional services are adult education, an orthodontic clinic, family planning clinic, milk station, and thrift shop.

The Board of Directors consists of 40 members, almost all Jewish, who raise funds. The settlement has an annual operating budget of \$700,000, about three-quarters of which is in city and state funds, and one-quarter in private donations.

The Grand Street Settlement is moving three blocks from its present location to the Gompers project, an area bordered by tenements. It is hoped that this new location will permit its services to be extended more fully to the tenement-dwellers.

EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE

The Educational Alliance (197 E. Broadway) each year serves on a regular basis 6,000 to 7,000 people of highly varied ethnic backgrounds and age. The majority of participants in the pre-school and youth programs are Puerto Ricans, with large numbers of black and Chinese youngsters as well, mostly from low-income homes. Those in the teen programs are also predominantly Puerto Rican and black, and tend to come from lower middle-class homes where they receive more than average encouragement to better themselves. Programs for the elderly generally serve long-time Jewish residents. Middle-income Jews tend to participate in cultural aspects of the program.

The program can be divided into four areas: (1) early childhood services, consisting of a day care center, Headstart, clubs, and the East Broadway school for disturbed children; (2) youth services—special, remedial, and tutorial education, cultural and fine arts programs, clubs and sports; (3) adult services, composed of arts and language classes, service projects, social clubs and senior citizens' clubs; (4) special services, consisting of a mental health consultation service, research and demonstration projects, student field training, and community organization service.

The Board of Directors is the governing body and consists of middle and upper-income Jewish members, former clients of the Alliance. At present there is some experimentation with the idea of having local people serve on the Board. The annual operating budget is approximately \$1.5 million. Although most of the funds are from private sources, some does come from the public sector. The staff consists of between 100 and 200 people; as in the other agencies, some are part-time, some full-time, paid and volunteer, professional and paraprofessional.

In the next five or six years the Alliance expects an increase in clientele, especially in the numbers of Chinese people using its facilities. Services will expand, with an infant care program instituted, and greater emphasis placed on remedial education.

HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT

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The Henry Street Settlement, which has four locations in addition to its main house at 265 Henry Street, operates in an area with a diverse population, and tries to offer programs appealing to all. Construction will start this year on a new building at Willett and Grand Street, mainly as a replacement for the old music school on Pitt Street, containing studios, workshops, and a small racial hall. The Settlement serves an age range from three to over sixty years. Twenty thousand clients annually from the area around Henry Street are served. They are predominantly Puerto Ricans of low-income background. This group participates free of charge, while those more able to pay are asked for fees based on financial ability.

The programs are varied and comprehensive. They include day care centers, manpower development and employment services, individual and group counseling, instruction in the fine arts, resident camps for youth, activities for the aged, and educational services such as tutoring for civil service and college entrance examinations. In the field of political and social action, the Settlement attempts to bring groups together for increased awareness of issues, and planning courses of action.

The Board of Directors is made up of interested volunteers from all over the city; some are local residents who have devoted years of service to the Settlement. There is at the moment a major trend for widespread client participation on the Board, and a Neighborhood Council of community people is being developed to work in conjunction with the Board of Directors. The present annual operating budget of the Henry Street Settlement is over \$1 million and is expected to rise in the future.

The Settlement employs a full-time staff of about 80 and a part-time staff of about 200 persons. Many of these are specialists in the fields of art, education and athletics, others are social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists. The trend is to train neighborhood youth in skills—especially athletics—so that they can move on to instructing others in the program.

HAMILTON-MADISON HOUSE

Hamilton-Madison House, whose major location is 186 South Street, serves a diverse clientele ranging in age from three and a half to over one hundred years. Most of the users of the House's services come from low-income groups. Puerto Ricans are the major participants in the teen-age and adult programs, while Chinese men make up the major share of the Golden Age Club. The child care programs are the most integrated, catering to Chinese, Puerto Rican, black, and white youngsters. Approximately 3,000 people are served annually by all programs.

The activities offered to local residents are numerous and varied. For children there are after-school programs, a child care center, classes in the arts and home economics, programs for the handicapped, Girl Scouts, and tutoring. Teen-agers participate in athletic and arts and crafts workshops. Adults have available the ABLE Buying Club, counseling and testing, training, discussion groups, and

various senior citizens' programs. Hamilton-Madison House works closely with the Two Bridges Council in the fields of housing, welfare, education, and health. Its welfare rights group is among the most active in the city. In the field of social action the House attempts to clarify issues and support the mobilization and actions of local groups.

The Board of Directors is composed of 35 members, eight from the community and the remainder people with access to outside funds. The Board initiates programs in conjunction with the staff. The annual operating budget is about \$600,000, with approximately half received in private contributions and half in services and aids (including VISTA volunteers) from public sources.

In the future Hamilton-Madison House expects a change in clientele, with a rapid increase in the numbers of Chinese participants. Services will be altered to the needs of this group. Also the House will continue to concentrate a large share of its resources on pressing for change in the school system.

DAY-CARE CENTERS

One of the most important services to a low-income community is day-care facilities for pre-school children and young school-aged children. These facilities provide recreational space and a pleasant social atmosphere for children who live in crowded tenements with little or no indoor or outdoor play space. They give children basic nursery education preparatory to elementary school (which is especially helpful to non-English speaking children) under the guidance of trained adult supervisors. A major function of the day-care centers is freeing mothers to work--either to supplement the father's income or to provide the only source of income--or to enroll in training programs to enable them to become self-sustaining.

There are about twenty day-care centers currently operating on the Lower East Side. (Refer to Map 10 for location of centers.) Twelve are run by private agencies under the auspices of the Department of Social Services, five by local community groups, and the remainder under private auspices. The centers sponsored by the Department of Social Services handle from 30 to over 100 children each, with the average enrollment around 50. Most children are 3 to 5 years old, four of the centers have after-school programs for children of 6 to 8. The program for the pre-schoolers is based on full-day care, including lunch, morning and afternoon snacks, nap periods, and active and quiet games. Trained teachers supervise educational play, health care, and social services. A professionally trained day-care consultant works with the Board of the agency on program development and use of public funds. The centers generally charge between \$2 and \$25 weekly for each child, depending on

family income, but no charge is made for children of families on welfare.

The five centers run by local groups were until 1968 financed by the Community Development Agency and are now assisted by the Department of Social Services. They are largely kept alive by the efforts of active mothers who were determined to see that this needed service was available to their children. The community day-care centers are unique in several ways, and also face difficult problems. Suitable housing is one; buildings that meet the physical requirements of the Department of Social Services are hard to find, so that most of the centers are currently in temporary quarters. They provide very important "drop-in" care (in addition to regular day-care) for mothers who must be away from home for a few hours. They care for children from 2 to 6 years, but may admit children as young as two months. In fact they are strongly urging the Department to lower the minimum age of children admitted to all centers from 3 years to two months. Their programs include the usual quiet and active games, snacks, and rest periods, but they have insufficient equipment. They rely heavily on classroom assistance from community mothers in addition to trained teachers.

The community groups sponsoring the centers, as well as other groups, joined together in 1968 to form the United Child Day Care Centers, Inc. (UCDCCC), with the goal of meeting local needs for children of three months to 6 years. The organization coordinates the efforts of centers to attain adequate funding, buildings, staff, and so forth, and makes recommendations to the city.

According to UCDCCC, the Lower East Side needs another 20 to 25 centers, each serving 60 to 70 children, or more than double the present capacity. There are presently long waiting lists at existing centers; for example, Hamilton-Madison House has a waiting list of 110 children. The UCDCCC strongly feels that the Department of Social Services should alter its requirement of 5,000 square feet and space for 30 children for each center, in view of the inability of the housing market to fulfill these requirements, and on the assumption that smaller facilities are better than none at all.

Any new housing planned for the Lower East Side must make provision for adequate day-care space commensurate with the expected rate of occupancy. The central section of the area, around Delancey and Houston Streets, and west of Avenue A, is particularly in need of such vital services.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The public library services of the Lower East Side are provided by five branches: Chatham Square at 33 East Broadway, Offendorfer at 135 Second Avenue, Hamilton Fish at 415 East Houston, Seward Park at 192 East Broadway and Tompkins Square Library at 331 East Tenth Street. (See Map 10, Public Services.)

The physical facilities of the local libraries are generally adequate. Hamilton Fish Library is about eight years old and has an auditorium adequate for current and feasible future use; Tompkins Square was renovated several years ago; Seward Park has one floor that is currently unused.

Generally, Lower East Side library users at most branches are school-age children and older residents--the former for school assignments and the latter, retired, for quiet activity. The other Lower East Side residents--housewives and non-professional working people whose jobs require long hours, but do not provide the motivation or need for continuous learning--are not library borrowers. Puerto Ricans, because of their lack of familiarity with English as well as with this type of community resource, are not currently active borrowers.

The collection of materials in the Lower East Side branch libraries, as in all local libraries, should relate to the ethnic, racial and economic characteristics of the community served in order to achieve maximum effectiveness and utilization. Books and other materials are presently attuned to the culture of the older ethnic groups in the area, and have not kept pace with changes on the Lower East Side, especially the growth of the Spanish-speaking population. Interviews with library staff indicated that efforts are made by each branch to update collections in this regard. Currently there is a collection of Italian and Spanish books which circulate monthly among the various branches. Branch personnel did express a need to expand their collection of Spanish literature in order to serve the growing Puerto Rican population. This expansion, to be effective, should be accompanied by a public information program designed to attract people to the libraries by explaining how they work and publicizing what they have to offer.

Not only would the value of the libraries be enhanced by offering books and magazines and other materials (e.g., films and records) geared to the new residents, but they would be more useful if the hours were changed to serve people who are not free during the day. The libraries are now essentially daytime places, most convenient to students, non-working adults, and retired people. Extending evening and weekend hours could make them more accessible to working people and mothers, the very residents who could most profit from their services. As was recommended in the chapter on education, the libraries should become a vital part of community experience, rather than representatives of an alien culture.

The Chatham Square Library (33 East Broadway) has a Chinese collection in the adult section, and some Spanish and Italian books in the children's collection. The library users are pre-

dominantly Chinese men. The library is fairly well stocked with books in Chinese, but has the second highest utilization of children's books in Manhattan, as well as a growing adult readership. However, since many Chinese children attend Chinese school after public school hours, they are unable to use the library. Clearly this branch should be open on Saturday to respond to a definite need.

The Offendorfer Library (135 Second Avenue), in addition to some French, Polish, and Yiddish books, has the finest collection of German books in the city, 3,000 volumes. Although most of the Germans have moved away from the area, this collection remains. At present the Offendorfer Library serves as mixed an ethnic grouping as branch libraries in other parts of New York, with no one group dominating. There is no children's collection. Plans are under way to buy more books of special interest to Negro and Puerto Rican readers.

Hamilton Fish Library (415 E. Houston Street), next to Junior High School 22, is heavily used by the neighboring students, by adults, and by citizens. There is a special section for children and young adults, and an adult reference collection. The library maintains a subscription to Yiddish newspapers for local residents. It is interested in expanding the small Spanish collection but cannot do so at present because of lack of funds.

Seward Park serves predominantly, in order of use, Jewish, Puerto Rican, Chinese, and Negro borrowers. It has a large Hebrew and Yiddish collection, some French and German books, and is currently expanding its Spanish collection. Seward Park has 37,000 volumes; 20,000 adult and 17,000 children's books. There is a special reference section on ethnic groups on the Lower East Side.

Tompkins Square Library has the largest and most diversified collection of the branches on the Lower East Side. The library has a total of 36,826 volumes: 25,376 adult and 11,451 children's books. It circulates 250,000 books annually, and maintains a regional reference library of over 2,000 volumes. In addition, there is a collection of computer and science literature, which is now being expanded; historical material on the Lower East Side; a newspaper morgue and large print books.

The collection of volumes also include the large Polish and Ukrainian section of the Burnet Library, for which there will be a continuing use in the community because of the reconstruction of both Polish and Ukrainian schools in the vicinity. There is a moderately large Spanish collection as well as other language books. The library services include special adult and children's programs, such as art, adult and children's films, and concerts.

Tompkins Square users include the old Polish and Ukrainian immigrant groups; older Italian and Jewish residents; newer Puerto Rican and Negro arrivals, brought in by the housing projects; and the young "hippie" groups who are generally well-read. As with Chatham Square, the age level of borrowers is generally split equally between children and adults.

At least one new library should be built in the area bounded by Essex Street, the River, and Delancey Streets, since this section will soon be rebuilt. Another branch, near Tompkins Square would also be desirable, for the population expected in the renewal area. As with the already existing libraries, the construction of new branches should be coupled with public

Information designed to attract and welcome users. The library, like the schools, must come to be regarded as an open community resource serving the interests of the residents. It need not be surrounded by "institutional" awe and grandeur.

ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMS

Alleviation of poverty is the indirect goal of many of the durable public services on the Lower East Side. Thus, campaigns to improve school instruction and health services share the belief that if people are educated and healthy they will have better opportunities to earn a decent living and productively participate in society. Following this premise, many of the traditional public and private services, such as the schools, health services, settlement houses and day-care centers, contribute to anti-poverty efforts.

Recently, however, efforts to relieve poverty have been embodied in new institutions that developed specific programs reflecting contemporary attitudes about the origins and manifestations of poverty. During the last two decades three organizations, the Lower East Side Neighborhood Association (LENA), Mobilization for Youth and the Lower East Side Community Corporation have been founded and have involved large numbers of residents in battling their individual situations, through for example, training in new careers; helping improve the physical and social environment around them through such things as new housing or day-care centers and exerting pressure on education, health and other services for changes in the conception and delivery of these public commodities.

LOWER EAST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (LENA)

Organized by cooperating church groups, social agencies and individuals in 1955, LENA was the first community-wide organization to have a practical concern with the eradication of poverty and securing improved public services. Committees were set up to determine and actively press for fulfillment of community needs in health, education, housing, recreation and civil rights. Councils, such as the Two Bridges and North East Neighborhood Councils, affiliated with LENA were established to encourage participation and action by residents on matters of local concern. Through active committees on Environmental Study and Planning, Education, Health and Youth LENA seeks broad-based and focused approaches to change in these areas. Direct services in housing action, welfare and employment are provided to residents by the staff of seven, which also furnishes guidance and direction to neighborhood groups.

One of the most exciting and active of LENA's recent efforts has been the support it has

given to the Lower East Side Planning and Development Coalition. The Coalition, an outgrowth of a community-wide conference last year, is committed to the area's economic improvement through manpower and job programs, and encouraging local businesses, construction, cooperatives and supportive services. It has representatives of grassroots organizations, business, labor, finance, the professions and local government. Up to now the Coalition has had the Lower East Side designated an economically needy area, making it eligible for various federal loans and grants, and is preparing a detailed plan for seeking growth industries that would provide well-paying, stable jobs for residents.

MOBILIZATION FOR YOUTH (MFY)

Mobilization for Youth was founded in 1962 under the impetus of local settlement houses and Columbia University as a five-year demonstration project to combat juvenile delinquency on the Lower East Side. The organization received approximately \$13 million from government sources such as the National Institute of Mental Health, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Department of Labor, the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and the City of New York, as well as private sources, such as the Ford Foundation, to set up, operate and research programs focusing on the root causes of juvenile delinquency.

As its planning and programs emphasized poverty and the denial of opportunities to young people to participate in the society, it was natural for MFY to become involved in anti-poverty activities when the Office of Economic Opportunity was established. In fact, many of MFY's programs and activist inclinations became the model for activities under the anti-poverty program. In the course of time more community members began to participate actively in the planning and implementation of programs.

From 1962 to 1967 a staff of three to four hundred persons intensively served about 10,000 Lower East Side adults and children annually. The major program divisions were Group and Community Services, Educational Opportunities, Legal Services, and Employment Opportunities. Some of the more prominent activities were the teacher-helper program; community organization programs, narcotics program, cultural arts, housing advisory services, services to small businessmen and crafts training.

With the decline of large government expenditures in anti-poverty programs, MFY was forced to cut its employment rolls sharply and to phase out major program areas. Some of the successful programs became incorporated into government agencies. Others, such as legal services, neighborhood service centers and the cooperative program, operate independently (although sometimes retaining the name MFY). The present annual budget is about \$2 million. There are about 150 staff members, of whom half live in the community. The ratio of professionals to non-professionals is about 60 to 40 percent.

MFY views its future role as raising the economic level of the individual through training in new career jobs, operating as a highly specialized employment opportunity center. The program as envisioned involves remedial education, credit loans, housing construction and renovation, cooperative enterprises and small business assistance.

during the past year, MFY staff have evolved a plan and initiated the establishment of an areawide economic development program called Mobilization for Urban Action. The agency has already secured some grants to begin implementing parts of the program. For example, a \$280,000 grant from the Department of Labor and OEO will be used to train adults in the field of medical technology. Another \$350,000 grant from OEO was renewed in 1969 for the Urban Cooperatives Project, which now functions as an independent agency, the Lower East Side Economic Development Association for Cooperatives. The Association now operates several programs, including a sewing cooperative, a credit union, a laundry cooperative and a cluster of renovated tenements and gives technical assistance to five children's centers.

LOWER EAST SIDE COMMUNITY CORPORATION

Formal anti-poverty activities are conducted by the Lower East Side Community Corporation, an arm of the city's Human Resources Administration's Community Development Agency. Governed by a community board that was elected in June, 1966, the Corporation, through its 15 person staff provides direct technical assistance to and reviews the activities of its delegate agencies.

Working within the Community Development Agency's annual anti-poverty allocation for the Lower East Side, the Corporation reviews proposals submitted by local organizations for money and makes recommendations to the Agency for funding. The Corporation's program is mainly carried out through local organizations, known as delegate agencies, who work in areas such as housing, health, social services and education. The Corporation itself makes referrals to social agencies in the neighborhood, cooperates with other agencies on projects and functions as an advocate for the poor. In such areas as tenant-landlord relations, health care policy and rent levels in public housing. Generally, the Corporation does not view itself as a continuing organization, but primarily as a means for helping individual groups function independently and as a general advocate on issues of concern to broad segments of the community.

The Corporation has suffered from many of the same problems that have eroded anti-poverty efforts in other places: a proliferated condition involving sources of livelihood, career opportunities, environmental situations, political powerlessness and feelings of personal status that cannot be resolved with the limited resources available to the anti-poverty program and within the institutional framework that controls it; administrative and organizational imperatives that divert a large share of the effort to bureaucratic survival and management, and requirements, such as yearly funding for programs, that inhibit rational long-range planning.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

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The Lower East Side has always had a large number of organized groups. During the European immigrations these groups coalesced on the basis of fraternal, religious and cultural bonds or mutual devotion to educational and charitable work. The present-day settlement houses and the ethnic-based churches recall the pre-occupations of that era. Nevertheless, in recent decades, as the older immigrants have been replaced by newcomers from the American south, Puerto Rico and China, the influence of the old established interest groups has waned. They have tended to become the guardians of the previous culture and its politics, while additional groups have sprung up to represent the interests of the newer immigrants. Many of these new organizations are of very recent origin, having been spawned, or at least strengthened, by the anti-poverty program and similar publicly-financed efforts, such as Mobilization for Youth and the Lower East Side Community Corporation. These new interests, ranging from block associations to community-wide groups, co-exist with the older church and fraternal groups. However, instead of stressing personal improvement and addressing themselves to individual infirmities, as did the settlement houses and the older charitable enterprises, the new groups have emphasized a macrocosmic approach to civic and social issues that can bring benefits to large segments of the community.

It is these new groups that have highlighted positions, crystallized opinion and compelled favorable decisions on a variety of recent issues, including the Lower Manhattan Expressway and the Cooper Square plan. In other areas, health care, for instance, where service was firmly entrenched in the old, established (and Establishment) institutions, they have organized new ways of delivering, or as it were, the community-operated Northeast Neighborhood Association (NENA) health center, for example, or formed groups such as the Lower East Side Neighborhood Health Council-South, to agitate for change in the older facilities. By compelling older institutions to respond to new needs and change their standards and policies, these groups have begun to influence many of the basic services on the Lower East Side. In fact, vast-pocket housing would never have been introduced into the community if many groups had not banded together, challenged the city's priorities and received a commitment to begin rebuilding.

Few of the achievements of the past half decade, ranging from schools to housing, would have been possible without an aroused community that was willing to organize and seek what it wanted. Few of the gains suggested in this report, from economic development to livable residential districts, can be attained without a confident and informed citizenry. In a fundamental sense, most of the recommendations offered are incomplete; they need to be worked over, restated, understood, and strongly supported in the community before they will become realities. The public awakening of the Lower East Side to a variety of vital issues has already begun with groups such as the Coalition for Human Housing, the Cooper Square Committee and the Two Bridges Neighborhood Council. It must continue and deepen if change is to come.

11. COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

SUMMARY

The aspect of economic activity to be considered in this chapter is Lower East Side enterprises, both those establishments catering primarily to residents of the area, and those with a much wider market, designated as local and non-local economic activity. The issues discussed are present employment levels and future prospects, the condition of industrial and commercial facilities, and the possibilities of reshaping the economic base in the manner most advantageous to the community.

At present Lower East Side enterprises employ about 28,000 workers, almost equally divided between local and non-local activities. Roughly 3,100 businesses employ an average of 9 workers per establishment.

Sixty-two percent of the employees in the local sector work in service industries, a large proportion for a depressed area. Housing projects, social service, anti-poverty programs, and settlement houses account for this high figure. In the retailing sector, eating and drinking places are the largest employer, although food stores have the largest number of establishments.

Though the area has sharply declined as a commercial center from its heyday in the early part of the century, much retail trade still prospers: for example, the Orchard Street merchants and the Canal Street jewelers (who serve non-local as well as local customers). The largest clusters of businesses serving community residents are between Houston, Delancey, Forsyth and Allen Streets. Jolancay Street is the commercial center of the area, yet it is shabby and for various reasons lacks the range of offerings that a main shopping street should provide.

The demand for commercial space for local activities has noticeably decreased in recent years. A 1968 survey of 6,000 storefronts found 2 percent vacant and 13 percent used for storage or non-commercial activities. The district suffers from a contracting local economy, little new investment, and domination by small firms with low business volumes.

The discussion of non-local enterprise is based on an enlarged area, including the industrial district west of the Bowery, which employs many local workers and vitally attracts the economic base. Of the three employment categories--manufacturing, wholesaling, and publishing--the first is the most important, with 80 percent of the workers and 7 out of 10 firms. Within manufacturing, the

apparel and textile industries are prominent, employing 55 percent of all manufacturing workers. Other major industries are printing and publishing, leather goods, and metal and machinery.

An important feature of the wholesale-retail portion of the export trades is the clustering of firms handling the same products, which attract customers doing comparative shopping, e.g. the jewellers along Canal Street, restaurant equipment suppliers and lighting fixtures stores along the Bowery, and apparel and yard goods outlets along Orchard Street.

Generally, the area has declined recently as a source of jobs in the export industries. Between 1958 and 1968 manufacturing employment declined by 7,000 jobs, more than half in the apparel trade. Private service and wholesaling employment increased. These fluctuations are most detrimental to the low-income worker who is ill-equipped for the "white-collar" and service jobs that have replaced them and suffers from the barrier of discrimination.

The causes for the decline must be sought in the context of major forces shaping the city and region--for example, the inducements for industry to locate in the suburbs--as well as neighborhood factors. Small, old and obsolete buildings, misused narrow streets, inadequate public transportation, and the lack of contiguous space for expansion are among the factors inhibiting changes in the existing physical plant. Petty crime is a major problem of small businesses. Finally, zoning and land use changes are needed to create an environment that will foster commercial growth. Commercial relocation, especially of businesses that prosper in clusters, will be a challenging problem in rebuilding.

Neither local entrepreneurship nor private business growth will provide the type of economic change that the Lower East Side needs. What is required is a multi-faceted approach that stresses community-based public and private efforts involving technical assistance, financing and management for industries that will provide good wages, stable employment and opportunities for training and advancement among the labor force.

Growth industries, such as services for government, businesses and institutions and elements of printing and publishing that can make use of a central location and renovated older buildings, should be sought for the industrial district west of the Bowery. It is estimated that within five years these enterprises could yield between 1,300 and 1,900 jobs for local workers. New housing and school construction and operation should be exploited to yield jobs for local workers. Disruptive businesses, such as trucking, should be relocated

out of residential areas, while the specialized trades like apparel and yard goods, should be retained as a vital and cohesive part of the economy. Delancey Street should be developed into a real commercial center, offering the variety and quality of goods available on the main streets of other communities.

The Lower East Side's present economic structure falls the low-income residents in several ways: not only does it fail to provide a decent living for most families, but it offers neither the opportunity for advancement nor the chance to do meaningful work that would foster individual dignity and self-esteem. A community development corporation would give the poor some measure of control over their economic destinies, as well as coordinate and encourage investment, manpower and political responsibility. The long-range goals of higher income and better jobs could also be best served by a cooperative development corporation. Moreover, training programs could be designed to equip workers for jobs in new industries such as those noted above.

The future commercial pattern on the Lower East Side may well be one of fewer establishments using available space more efficiently, and employing more workers. Cooperatives--both consumer and business--will become more popular. In short, the future economic base will be a conjunction of the labor force and commercial land use in a dynamic context of growth, prosperous to the degree that government and business commit themselves in terms of interest, investment and initiative.

PRESENT ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

As with any community, the Lower East Side's economic activity is made up of several interdependent parts. Among these are enterprises located on the Lower East Side that produce income and employment by selling to a local market, enterprises that draw most of their income and employment from sales to markets outside the community and income produced by residents working within or outside the Lower East Side.

This chapter will be concerned mainly with the first two categories, which are designated local and non-local economic activity respectively. Among the factors to be considered are: present employment levels and prospects for the Lower East Side's economy, the condition of industrial facilities, and the possibilities of reshaping parts of the economic base in a manner beneficial to the community. The next chapter, Income and Employment, will consider sources of livelihood, the characteristics of the labor force, and opportunities for improving the earning abilities and occupational status of residents.

LOCAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

A 1967 survey showed about 28,000 people employed on the Lower East Side, almost equally divided between local and non-local (or export) jobs. They were employed by 3,100 separate enterprises, with an average of nine workers per firm. According to Table 38, local economic activity is almost equally divided among three categories: private services, retailing, and public services. A total of 62 percent of all local employment is in service activities, a surprisingly high share for a low-income neighborhood with a declining population. A substantial share of local service employment is connected with newer aspects of community improvement, with people working in housing projects, social service and anti-poverty programs and settlement houses.

The average number of employees per firm in the private sector is 5.8. However, less than two percent of the firms employ 25 percent and 18 percent of the employees in the private service and retailing categories, respectively. Eating and drinking establishments, public services and the public schools are the largest sources of employment in the local sector of the economy.

Even at this level of analysis it is clear that a share of what is designated local employment also serves a much larger territory, city-wide and even regional in extent. A reasonable share of real estate services benefits outsiders. Likewise, a good deal of the retail trade, such as the Orchard Street yard goods and apparel merchants, and the jewelers along Canal Street, is supported by people from other parts of the city and metropolises. Establishments serving local residents are scattered throughout the community in response to the distribution of population, although there are no stores or services in public housing. The most extensive cluster of these businesses is between Houston, Delancey, Forsyth and Allen Streets, where hundreds of small retailing and specialized places are crowded into one of the most compact residential districts in Manhattan.

Delancey Street is the Lower East Side's center of commerce. However, even this celebrated street is shabby and does not have the vitality and variety one would expect on the "main street" of a large community. In addition to the effects of historical patterns, this weakness results from competing shopping areas (e.g., Fourteenth Street and Union Square, which are more accessible to many residents), the attraction of local shopping streets, such as First and Second Avenues, and the difficulty of reaching Delancey Street from many parts of the Lower East Side, especially the eastern half.

Writing in 1895, the American novelist William Dean Howells described a Lower East Side shopping street as "a vast bazaar...The sidewalks and the roadways were thronged with peddlers and purchasers."

As late as the 1930's the Lower East Side still had the aspect of a vast market place and workplace. Much of its commerce took place in small shops on the ground floor of tenements or at pushcarts lining the curbs. Many apartments were home workshops for the apparel trade. Even today, the Orchard Street mart and a few side-

*The Lower East Side: Portal to American Life (New York, the Jewish Museum, 1966), p. 51

Local Economic Activity

	<u>Number of Employees</u>	<u>Number of Firms</u>
<u>Private Services</u>		
Transportation and Utilities	337	12
Banking and Insurance	121	16
Lodging and Entertainment	417	37
Repairs	331	94
Medical and Legal	508	87
Nonprofit Membership Associations	753	14
Real Estate	1,178	98
Miscellaneous Business and Personal	659	330
Total	4,304	708
<u>Retailing</u>		
Eating and Drinking Establishments	1,971	145
Food Stores	1,150	326
Apparel Stores	805	158
Furniture Stores	385	95
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	1,167	262
Total	5,478	986
<u>Public Services</u>		
Board of Education	1,563	
Housing Projects	850	
Welfare	645	
Other Public Services (e.g., Police, Fire, Sanitation)	1,758	
Total	4,816	(a)
Total	14,598	1,694

(a) Public employment is counted as a single employer

Source. N. Y. State Department of Commerce, Field Survey, 1967

streets convey some of this intensity. But since Howells' era the population of the Lower East Side has decreased by more than half, the neighborhood has declined greatly as a place of commerce and work, and the habits of consumers have changed. The dispersed and fine-grained commercial network that served a crowded and self-contained community is no longer needed, though much of its skeleton remains. Very few of the old blocks on the Lower East Side are strictly residential. Almost all have ground floor storefronts, at least on the two avenue frontages, and often on all sides. Sharing the blocks with the tenements are small loft buildings, now frequently vacant or used for storage.

The extent to which the demand for commercial space has fallen is illustrated by a 1968 survey: of the almost 6,000 storefronts on the Lower East Side, 42 percent were vacant and 13 percent were used for storage or community activities like churches or social clubs. Vacancies are highest in the blocks between Houston and Grand Streets, where almost one out of six store fronts is un-

occupied, while above Houston almost the same share is in non-commercial use. Such vacancies and marginal use document the decline of local economic activity on the Lower East Side. Locally-oriented firms serve a shrinking low-income market which spends more of its income in other neighborhoods than previous groups. Even the replacement of some of the poor by moderate income families in the 1960's did not really help local sales and jobs, as the new residents spent a larger share of their incomes, particularly for consumer durables, outside the community. This is not to say that there are no flourishing enterprises along Delancey Street or First Avenue, but they exist in a contracting local economy that has seen little new investment or expansion, and is dominated by small firms with low sales volume.

Private service employment may grow, as it has in other urban centers, although much of it is not strongly linked to the Lower East Side and could be attracted to more favorable locations still accessible to residents. The

public service sector probably will keep growing as city and private agencies recognize the great social and educational needs of the community. Such activity is relatively independent of family income and is likely to expand through community influence and governmental concern as the area is rebuilt.

NON-LOCAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Strictly speaking, the export category includes only establishments located within the boundaries of the Lower East Side that sell to markets outside the community. In practice however, the Industrial district west of the Bowery is important and merits inclusion. Not only do many inhabitants work there, but the district will also vitally effect the economic base of the residential community. Therefore, non-local economic activity and general trends are discussed in terms of an enlarged area covering four zip codes (10002, 10003, 10009 and 10012).

Type and Size of Firms

Of the three categories in Table 39, manufacturing, wholesaling and public services, the first is by far the most important, with over 80 percent of total export employment and over 7 out of 10 firms. Wholesaling has almost 15 percent of employment and almost 3 out of 10 firms. Of the eighty thousand jobs covered (14,000 local and 66,000 export), almost 54,000 are in manufacturing, a much higher share than in the city as a whole and an indication of the

problems inherent in reshaping the community's economic base. This inordinately high ratio is almost entirely due to the dominance of the apparel and textile industries, which have 55 percent of all manufacturing employment. Other important industries and their proportion of employment are printing and publishing (14 percent), wholesale trade (13 percent), leather goods (5 percent), and metal and machinery (5 percent).

Firms vary considerably by size, depending mainly on the product line. In general, wholesaling firms are smaller, with an average of 9.3 workers. Within the manufacturing group there is much variation, ranging from 8 employees in construction to 32.8 in women's clothing. On the whole the needle trades are important, with an average of 27.5 workers in each firm.

Location of Firms

The vast majority of jobs (52,000 out of 66,000) are west of the Bowery; over 90 percent of the manufacturing employment for firms with 100 or more workers is located in the Industrial corridor between the Bowery and West Broadway. The only exception to this pattern is in food products, where one-third of the establishments are located east of the Bowery. West of the Bowery specific types of firms are fairly evenly distributed, with discernible concentrations of apparel and textiles along and near Broadway, and paper, printing and publishing north of 4th Street. East of the Bowery, non-local firms form several clusters.

TABLE 39

Non-Local Economic Activity

	Number of Employees	Number of Firms
<u>Manufacturing</u>		
Women's Clothing	18,024	549
Paper Products, Printing, Publishing	9,123	559
Miscellaneous Textile Products	6,525	335
Men's Clothing	5,165	197
Leather Goods	3,655	168
Metal and Machinery	3,471	224
Contract Construction	1,720	213
Rubber and Plastic Products	985	75
Food Products	959	40
Miscellaneous	3,961	340
	53,588	2,698
<u>Wholesaling</u>		
Trucking and Warehousing	889	134
Wholesale Trade	8,616	887
	9,505	1,021
<u>Public Services</u>		
Centralized Maintenance and Repair Operations for City Departments	2,509	---
Total	65,602	3,719

Note: Totals include 14,000 non-local jobs and the employing firms, located within the residential Lower East Side.

Source: N. Y. State Department of Commerce, Field Survey, 1967

distinct groupings run along the Bowery, mainly below Houston Street, on Canal Street, Grand Street, Division Street, and East Broadway. Generally, the zone bordered by the Bowery, Delancey, Essex and Canal Streets has the largest concentration of export activity.

Data on vacancies in lofts, the building type favored by non-local activity, is difficult to obtain. A 1968 exterior survey east of the Bowery indicated that about 8 percent of the loft space was vacant and an additional 35 percent used for storage. Storage use is highest in the blocks above Houston Street, where it reaches 42 percent; only 4 percent of the space was vacant. South of Canal Street, where loft space is more actively used, the vacancy and storage rates were 14 and 19 percent respectively. West of the Bowery, a 1968 survey of 12 industrial blocks between Houston and Broome Streets reported an 8 percent vacancy rate. An additional 14 percent was occupied by artists as studio space or combined studio-residence; an occupancy roughly comparable to the marginal use of space for storage east of the Bowery.

Special Activity Clusters

The historical prominence of the Lower East Side as a mercantile center is still evident, although in a subdued fashion, in the clusters of specialized wholesale-retail firms handling the same products. Usually these firms are small and locate near each other to attract a larger pool of customers engaged in comparative shopping. Many of these clusters, such as the flea-makers and the fabric stores, engage in both wholesale and retail trade, mainly to an export market; others, such as the wedding dress shops along Grand Street, retail to a non-local market. These clusters still manage to maintain the tradition of the Lower East Side as a diverse market place and as a place of assembly.

The following clusters deal mainly in an export trade. The jewelers along Canal Street between Mott and Allen Streets and down Eldridge Street, restaurant equipment suppliers lining the Bowery between Canal and Houston Streets; lighting fixture stores along and near the Bowery between Delancey and Grand Streets (see Chapter 13 for a discussion of these last two clusters); necktie makers on Allen between Rivington and Delancey Streets; the odd-lot jobbers (novelties, toys and hardware) along Ludlow and Attorney Streets; and finally, the largest in terms of number of establishments, the apparel and yard goods outlets along Orchard Street between Houston and Hester Streets.

It is difficult to judge the economic health of these groups, especially from the condition of the stores and the sometimes vacant tenements above. Often a shabby store will be used to persuade customers that they are getting a bargain. Some data gathered from interviews with proprietors is available for the Orchard Street market and the restaurant equipment and lighting fixture suppliers. In both cases the owners report that despite problems with thievery and burglary and lack of parking for customers, they are doing quite well in preserving their city-wide and regional markets. Stores that do depend to some degree on the business of local people have altered their stock and changed personnel (e.g., hired Spanish speaking salespeople) to attract their new clientele.

A 1969 survey disclosed that not one of the

323 storefronts in the Orchard Street market between Houston and Canal Streets was vacant, although some were being used for storage or a non-commercial occupancy.* This evidence and the comments of the proprietors seem to indicate a rather strong market and no substantial decline in customers. It should be noted, however, that the special clusters are not growing visibly nor generating a climate for additional local investment.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

Once a flourishing manufacturing and wholesaling center, the Lower East Side and its westerly environs have severely declined as a source of jobs. To a degree the causes can be attributed to pervasive changes in the national and metropolitan economic base, as well as to more localized factors.

METROPOLITAN CHANGE

It has been estimated that between 1958 and 1968 manufacturing employment on the Lower East Side declined by 7,000 jobs -- 6,000 in non-durable manufacturing and 1,000 in durable. About 4,600 of the non-durable jobs lost were in the apparel trades. Although recently the apparel trade has resurged somewhat in the workshops near Chinatown, these are mainly unstable, low-wage, non-unionized firms that rely upon a "captive" female labor supply from Chinatown. Data on local employment in services and retailing is not available. However, public services have undoubtedly increased in response to anti-poverty and community welfare efforts, new housing projects and new programs in the schools. Private local service jobs may well have declined for the same reasons that affected retailing: a contracting and changing population without the buying power of more prosperous sections of the metropolis. Insofar as local wholesaling is connected to declining manufacturing and population shifts, it too probably declined in the past few decades.

Major Economic Forces

In ten years the Lower East Side, where manufacturing provides about two-thirds of all employment, lost 12 out of every 100 of its manufacturing jobs. In the needle trades, which provide about half of all manufacturing jobs, 16 out of every 100 jobs were lost. Dramatic changes of this nature must be viewed in the context of the underlying forces that are shaping the economy of the city and region.

The shift of job openings in New York City from manufacturing to services (108,000 jobs were lost in a decade), has been detrimental to the

*Peter G. Pekas, *The Orchard Street Market*, 1969 (student project at Yale University)

low-income worker. Beginning jobs in government or private services (e.g., business services and finance) require more formal education than comparable production jobs. Service industries demand higher levels of education, developed and literate skills, and the ability to transfer these skills between tasks, characteristics lacking by a low income labor supply whose experience has been in low paid industries like apparel.

Another important feature in the economy has been the shift in industrial locations within the metropolis. Formerly the central city offered certain economic benefits to a firm. Among these were access to a large supply of manpower with an array of skills, the nearness of markets, opportunities for sharing business and professional services, and the ability to produce and distribute at a sufficient scale within the confines of standard loft buildings and a dynamic city. In recent years, the benefits of a central location have tended to be outweighed by the disadvantages. Traffic congestion, the scarcity of land for expansion, an unstable labor supply, and changes in production processes have made it desirable for many manufacturing firms to leave the city.

Large new industries, such as electronics and instruments, using a mixture of high and low skilled manpower, but not limited by transportation costs and nearness to markets, have grown up entirely in the suburbs. Government incentives in the form of highways, tax concessions, and favorable zoning have worked against the poor and the central city, while making it attractive for industry to locate and expand in the surrounding suburbs.

It has been observed that such locational changes

"serve to exacerbate the effects of a changing occupational and industrial structure in concentrating the social costs of economic growth on that strata of the labor force and its associated population characterized by low and obsolesced human capital, racial discrimination and limited mobility. It also furthers the concentration of the poor into enclaves such as the Lower East Side which become the repository of those whose ability to function has been increasingly impaired by the growth process."^{*}

In commenting on current conditions on the Lower East Side, this source noted that:

"The industrial base of the area with its historical legacy of low wage industry (e.g. the needle trades) is unable to attract growth industries such as business services, suitable to an area in a metropolitan central business district, because of the heritage of disinvestment in industrial facilities, the absence of suitable labor supply and an industrial and residential infrastructure which is not competitive with other areas of the city."

LOCAL FACTORS

Many of the factors that deter economic growth on the Lower East Side are the same ones that inhibit rebuilding for a residential populace, that is, transportation, land use, the physical nature of buildings and the need for planned development.

Transportation

As noted in other chapters, although the Lower East Side has an excess of streets, few are through routes. Travel between the Lower East Side and other sections of the city is limited to the major corridors leading to bridges and highways. There is no clear system of roadways for moving within the community, so that much commercial traffic filters through residential blocks. Such traffic also comes from the disruptive mixture of industry and heavy commerce with residences on many blocks. Streets are generally narrow, with curb and double parking often limiting traffic to one moving lane. There are few facilities for off-street parking and even less provision in the old lofts for off-street loading and unloading.

Many merchants, such as those along Orchard and Grand Streets, claim that traffic congestion, usually attributed to the lack of adequate parking, is their major problem. One has only to try to drive near Orchard Street on a Sunday to realize that parking, both legal and illegal, and traffic are serious issues to many businesses. Although off-street parking, judicious street closings, and traffic reroutings can relieve a share of the local congestion, traffic will always be congested and parking difficult for the Lower East Side's Sunday customers.

Employees and non-local customers suffer from the same mass transit difficulties as residents. Although the western part of the area, especially west of the Bowery, is well served by subway and bus routes, the eastern part, where most of the people live, is not nearly as favored. New subway lines will improve service in the western sections and offer partial relief in the eastern blocks above Houston Street. The stagnation of Delancey Street is partly due to the difficulty of reaching it by mass transit; for example, the subway lines that converge at Delancey and Essex Streets do not serve the heartland of the Lower East Side. (See Chapter 6 on Transportation.)

Land Use

The small blocks and the dispersion of businesses throughout the area create severe physical problems for industrial rebuilding. Many businesses occupy small, multi-storied buildings on blocks that contain a combination of residences, stores, offices and warehouses. They cannot expand under these circumstances; businesses like trucking and wholesaling may be too disruptive to co-exist with residences. The pattern of small blocks and parcels makes it even more difficult to expand or build new space on a private basis.

Zoning

Generally the zoning pattern reflects the existing distribution of commerce and industry. A large commercial zone extends from about Essex (with an arm along Delancey)

* An Industrial Development Corporation, Mobilization for Youth, 1969.

to Centro-Lafayette Streets, from East Broadway to Houston Street and west of the Bowery is a manufacturing zone. The remainder, except for some islands of commercial zoning, is zoned for residential use. Within the residential zones, six of the avenues above Houston Street, as well as Clinton Street, are zoned commercially along the avenue frontages. Below Dolancny Street there are smaller islands and strips of commercial zoning.

If the community's economy is to be revitalized, changes will have to be made in zoning: the pattern west of the Bowery will have to be made flexible enough to accommodate mixed-use development and higher densities at certain points, such as major streets or transit stops. Land use changes that can be secured through planning and renewal may also be needed to direct re-uses to certain critical anchor points or places of access. The ubiquitous frontage commercial zoning and the large commercial section west of Essex Street will also need redefinition in order to concentrate and strengthen activities at certain locations.

Physical Conditions

Not surprisingly, most commercial and industrial buildings in the Lower East Side are old, and generally obsolete for contemporary production and goods handling. Many are maintained at close to minimum standards. Only occasionally does a new building, such as the Carvel stand at Catherine Street, appear. Investment has been confined to new storefronts and interiors for the more prosperous stores along the main avenues; other shops seem to pride themselves on looking shabby.

In a recent survey, three-quarters of the commercial buildings along the Bowery were classed as dilapidated or deteriorated. Many of these buildings and those along Orchard Street are empty or used for storage above the first floor businesses. Apparently there is insufficient demand for such space to encourage the owners to overcome problems of access, renovation costs, insurance, and crime to make their buildings usable.

The old loft buildings, more common west of the Bowery, are not suited to modern manufacturing processes. For example, a 1968 study of 12 blocks in the area noted that over half of the firms that moved out between 1962 and 1968 cited lack of contiguous space as their main reason for leaving. Lofts in this district tend to be small; only about half of the buildings offer more than 2,500 square feet. East of the Bowery a similar pattern probably pertains. Occupying almost all of a narrow lot, receiving light and air only in the front and back, and providing no off-street parking or loading, these five and six-story buildings are not attractive for new industry and often have trouble holding their present occupants.

Renewal relocation has highlighted some of the problems of the small commercial proprietors. Tied to a particular location, often owning the decaying building, uninterested in new investment, much loss in moving, they may be hurt economically and emotionally by the disruptions of relocation. If the Lower East Side is to be rebuilt, commercial relocation will be a major undertaking for there are businesses on almost every block. The degree

to which mutually-supporting commercial clusters can be moved and reconstituted, or resettled in their present locations requires close examination. (Consider, for example, the problems in resettling or renovating the invitingly obsolete Orchard Street market with its hundreds of properties.) It will require careful planning to provide new space at the right locations and for small, possibly marginal, businesses.

Other Factors

Some merchants along Orchard Street mentioned high rents as a problem. Generally, rent levels seem to be within reason, although they may be considered high in terms of the services they include. Loft space seems to rent for \$1.00 to \$1.50 a square foot, certainly a reasonable rate for an old industrial district. However, if loft space were renovated, the costs would increase, with a detrimental effect on some businesses.

Among retailers, crime can be a serious problem, sometimes rivaling traffic and parking. Petty crimes, such as shoplifting, robbery and burglary, are most commonly mentioned. The incidence of these crimes is increasing, with most of it related to drug addiction. Merchants can take some precautions against shoplifting and burglary, such as installing protective gates, but armed robberies are more frightening and more difficult to deter. With thousands of shops, many of them small, spread out over hundreds of blocks, a large population of drug addicts, and an overburdened police force, it is hard to see how crime can be lessened unless the merchants themselves undertake cooperative protective measures.

FUTURE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Economic improvement of the Lower East Side can take three basic directions: promoting entrepreneurship by local residents, developing new economic enterprises in or near the community and opening up jobs in the city and regional economy to residents.

In its traditional forms, the first, local entrepreneurship, has the most limited chance of improving economic conditions in the neighborhood. Even if existing businesses could be transferred to local ownership and technical and financial aid provided, the gain to the community would be small. Local businesses are small, they do not furnish many jobs to residents and profits are only a modest share of total income. Moreover, the local service enterprises that would be the likely candidates for such transfers are not thriving in a time of changing population and consumer habits. A second route would be

to help residents to start up new businesses. This approach is complex and hazardous, largely because of the scarcity of appropriate opportunities, capital and qualified entrepreneurs, although if it succeeded the results could be salutary.

The most fruitful approach for developing the Lower East Side would seem to be a combination of local business ownership and economic development. In this form, individual entrepreneurship would be sacrificed to some type of community development corporation which would have access to sufficient resources and inducements to be able to help start new enterprises or attract firms into the area. Incentives of location, financial and technical assistance and labor force would be balanced against likely benefits to the community in terms of on the job training, possibilities for upgrading and wage scales for employees.

Even if this approach should succeed and certain kinds of businesses and services can be attracted to the Lower East Side, the bulk of the community's labor force will still depend on the larger economy of the city and region for their livelihood and career opportunities. Therefore, the most important determinant of the Lower East Side's economic future will be the extent to which it can help its resident labor force enter the mainstream economy and provide them with the skills they need to successfully compete.

GENERAL CHANGES

The following kinds of changes should be expected in the neighborhood's economic activity.

Local Activity

To a large extent local economic activity is determined by population features. Stabilization of the population at about the present numerical level, but with a larger share of minority families, hopefully enjoying growing real incomes, will be an important factor.

Progressive redevelopment will gradually reduce the oversupply of local commercial space (i.e., individual storefronts) and should be used to consolidate existing and new space at important streets and crossroads. The number of establishments will decline because of changing consumer habits and the removal of marginal space through renewal. However, while gross space and the number of establishments are shrinking, retail employment, which is now reported to be lower on a per capita basis than in other neighborhoods, should increase. What will emerge are fewer establishments making more efficient use of larger quarters, and a somewhat larger body of workers. The small grocery or household goods store will remain, but in lessening numbers, emphasizing personalized service, credit, and convenience to nearby customers.

As older, amortized space disappears rents are likely to increase, often above the level that small businesses can afford. Formation of cooperatives among producers and merchants to acquire and maintain existing space and improve new space could help avert a rent squeeze and provide better commercial and industrial facilities in the neighborhood.

Another form that should appear more fre-

quently is the consumer cooperative in such areas as food, household goods, and drugs. With help from an economic development corporation in location, organization, financing and management, they can even be linked to producing and marketing cooperatives. An aging proprietorship, in existing private businesses, changes in buying preferences and the hardship of operating small shops should also encourage the decline of present business patterns and the emergence of new forms.

Non-Local Activity

Much of the existing industrial base is declining, low-paying (i.e., needle trades), and beset by the problems of operating in a declining area. Growth industries that offer well-paying jobs to residents and can exploit the locational attributes of the community should be encouraged to locate in the Lower East Side's industrial district. Major export employment will probably come from firms seeking the advantages of a location near downtown and midtown city centers and able to accept the costs of operating in a central city. Such firms already in the area include printing and publishing, metal and machinery, and rubber and plastic products. Together they already employ about one-third of all manufacturing workers.

It is possible to make some judgments on what types of industry would be most appropriate for the Lower East Side. A 1968 study analyzed the growth potential of industries on the Lower East Side. Five factors, such as growth rates and firm size, were applied to industry categories on the Lower East Side. Table 40 illustrates the distribution, based on 100 points for the ten most important sources of manufacturing employment. These priorities emphasize industries that are heavily influenced by the external economies of a central location, such as printing and publishing, and metal and machinery. In terms of the existing manufacturing structure the results are not too encouraging. Several of the largest employers, such as clothing and leather goods, receive very low point scores. Industries now employing half of all manufacturing workers are allocated only 5.8 out of 100 points in the ranking. However, two of these industries, printing and publishing, and metal and machinery, pay high wages and provide good chances for workers' advancement. Commercial printing, for example, is a New York growth industry and pays local wages of over \$3.50 an hour.

Although manufacturing gains will be limited, there is a market for well-situated and well-serviced new space. Accordingly, as the first stage of a renewal plan for the Bowery, new lofts suitable for printing and manufacturing are proposed for the east side of the Bowery between Canal and Grand Streets. The rationale for these plans is detailed in Chapter 13.

Rather than seeking the Lower East Side's economic salvation in manufacturing, it would be wiser to encourage firms that not only will value the convenient location but will also renovate and re-use some of the older multi-storied loft buildings. Other studies have identified data processing, technical and business services as types of firms that could benefit from an accessible location between Manhattan's office centers. If these businesses were attracted to the area it is

TABLE 40

Growth Industry Rankings for the Lower East Side

<u>Industry Group</u>	<u>Percent of Manufacturing Employment</u>	<u>Priority Point Distribution</u>
Women's Clothing	33.6	2.7
Paper Products, Printing and Publishing	17.0	19.5
Miscellaneous Textile Products	12.1	15.3
Men's Clothing	9.7	
Leather Goods	6.9	3.1
Metal and Machinery	6.5	33.9
Contract Construction	3.2	
Rubber and Plastic Products	1.8	11.4
Food Products	1.7	5.3
Miscellaneous	7.5	8.8
		100

Source: Employment: N.Y. State Department of Commerce,
Field Survey, 1967.
Point Distribution: Leo Kramer Associates, 1968.

estimated that in five years they could yield 1,500 to 1,900 jobs, half of which could be filled by community residents. Other industries, such as commercial printing and medical suppliers, are already growing on the Lower East Side and could be linked to the business services and to the large educational, institutional and medical groupings in southern Manhattan.

Wholesaling and trucking do not seem to have a bright future in the area. Renewal and other improvements may replace much of the inexpensive loft space and underused land that these operations require. Rent increases and the difficulty of maintaining low intensity uses will probably compel them to move to peripheral sites. The exceptions will be, for example, wholesaling linked to growth industries, such as suppliers of paper and ink to commercial printers, and vendors of small, high-value goods, such as medical or educational items.

Larger specialized trades like restaurant equipment, jewelers, and the Orchard Street dealers appear surprisingly strong and could remain for quite some time in the appropriate environment. The question is the degree to which they may impede comprehensive renewal and can be permitted to use space so extravagantly. If renewal occurs, the delicate questions of resettling extended and traditional wholesale markets will have to be faced. Meanwhile, certain shops described in the next sub-section can be taken to maintain their cohesion and strength.

PHYSICAL CHANGES

Certain important changes in the physical setting can enhance the Lower East Side's economic base and help make the community more livable. The can be grouped under the categories of rebuilding, transportation, and zoning.

Rebuilding

Gradual rebuilding of the Lower East Side will permit the following kinds of changes in economic activities:

Remove intrusive wholesaling and trucking from blocks that are to be rebuilt as

residential districts.

Make Delancey Street a community center for commerce, private services, and certain public services. This will require changes in surface transportation, parking, zoning and an influx of public and private investment. Among the specific improvements that might be sought are a medium-sized department store, public spaces, such as plazas and walkways, integration of the commercial cross-streets such as Clinton and Orchard Streets, and a bus system, possibly using jitneys, that links the commercial area to the residential districts.

Concentrate new or renovated commercial space at important points, such as at stops on the new subway lines or at potentially active intersections such as those along Houston Street.

Provide ample space for commerce and community services, such as day care, for example, to remain and grow in a way that provides convenient services for their clients and makes the most efficient use of structures and transportation.

Attract new enterprises, such as business services, that are related to the growth sectors of the metropolitan economy and that will provide the livelihood and satisfactions required by the resident labor force.

Make maximum use of the existing resources of a developed but declining economic structure: vacant and amortized industrial space, a nearby labor force and proximity to the city's business centers.

Develop construction methods, financing and management techniques for renovating and re-using lofts. Institute changes in the loft setting (i.e. street and block pattern) that will make the environment around the renovated buildings more attractive and usable. These might include selective street closings, off-street parking and loading, services for workers, small rest areas and the like.

Changes in the circulation system and mass transit routes are among the steps that can be taken to enhance the Lower East Side's position as a commercial center. These include:

Close shopping streets such as St. Marks Place and Orchard Street to through automobile traffic and reserve them for pedestrians and necessary service vehicles. Redirect traffic around these blocks and provide off-street parking in selected locations, to help preserve access and the character of the specialized markets.

Enforce existing parking regulations and establish new regulations that will provide efficient access for customers and suppliers to shops and services. Provide reasonable amounts of new off-street parking in strategic locations, such as near Delancey Street (already under construction) and the Bowery, where a combination of demands (e.g., day and evening, weekend and weekday, industry and shopping) could be served.

Re-route bus lines to provide better east-west service to the industrial area west of the Bowery (most local lines run north-south) and improve service to Delancey Street from other parts of the community. For example, a local low fare (or free) loop bus route focussed on Delancey Street might help enhance its value as a shopping street.

Recommendations in the chapter on Transportation and Streets should also help the community's economic outlook. These include concentrating and expediting necessary through traffic, such as commercial vehicles, on designated streets while simultaneously limiting vehicular entry into residential districts, to improving signalization and traffic flow on peak weekend hours.

Zoning

The proliferated local commercial structure, a product of an era of much larger population and the ubiquitous avenue storefronts needs to be examined from the point of view of zoning, and land use controls. The gradual rebuilding of much of the Lower East Side, the attraction of certain cross-roads, the existing and proposed street and transit systems, provide opportunities for reorganizing a good part of the commercial network through affirmative zoning and rebuilding controls. Recommendations include removing commerce from interior streets and blocks and concentrating it at points of general access and attraction; providing for an orderly transition between the existing structure and a more precise new arrangement, and allocating space, financing and organizational resources for viable clusters of businesses facing relocation.

Similarly, the large area zoned for commercial use between Essex Street and Broadway is rather unrealistic in terms of present possibilities and the need for residential rebuilding. It should be evaluated with a view towards directing future commercial development, through standards and incentives to places where opportunities such as existing loft space and transit connections (i.e. the new Second Avenue subway) can be exploited.

Given its present state of decline and the unlikelihood of an economic resurgence through "market" forces or transferring ownership of existing enterprises to minority businessmen, it would seem that the most reliable means for economic growth on the Lower East Side would be a community-wide economic development corporation with access to a wide range of public and private resources. Thus, the forthcoming designation of the community as an economically depressed area by the Federal government will make it eligible for certain types of assistance. Resources like this will have to be marshalled if the community is to survive economically.

Detailed examinations of the area's economic base have suggested that an "industrial complex" approach would be the most promising form for enhancing local economic opportunities.* Such an approach would unite "social overhead, industrial infrastructure and direct investment" to yield economic activity that will provide jobs with chances for advancement, and additional household income and contribute to physical rebuilding and social change.

As envisioned by the economic planners individual economic enterprises would be connected and mutually supported by forward and backward linkages. Forward linkages refer to the use of the output of one enterprise by another as in the connection between food processing and marketing cooperatives. Backward linkages could connect the food processor to manpower recruitment, training and placement activities. Together the enterprises could offer consumer benefits in the form of lower prices and better merchandise, a marketable product (both for local and export consumption) from the food processor and job training and income benefits from both ventures.

Among the criteria for inclusion of individual enterprises in the industrial complex approach would be: the degree to which income and industries are provided, the existence of opportunities for forward and backward linkages and the utilization of external economies. Plans for expanding existing firms and attracting new ones would be judged on the basis of such criteria. Thus, even though a firm offered a high intensity of labor, if these were low-paying, low-grade jobs without advancement possibilities, such as abound in the apparel trades, they would not be encouraged to remain or locate in the area, nor would community cooperatives in these fields be promoted.

Ties to ongoing firms could take a variety of forms: agreements for job training and placement where openings in skilled occupations could be filled by the local labor force; affiliations between a community based development corporation and clusters of local businesses covering credit, overhead services and external economies; arrangements involving local enterprises, community cooperatives and manpower programs that will seek to gain markets for local products and services among institutions and government in nearby sections of the city; services to local businesses that might include securing public and private financing for the purchase and renovation of loft space, management training and assistance and undertaking technical aid and research of a specific or general nature.

*Most notably in papers prepared by the Lower East Side Economic Planning and Development Coalition.

Employment and job advancement and a beneficial community product can also be gained through social services and the physical rebuilding of the Lower East Side. Thus, a continuous program for reconditioning (see Chapter 4) and replacing the tenements offers opportunities for training and employment in a wide array of skills connected with construction, maintenance and housing management. Similarly, the health and medical care system outlined in Chapter 9 can be built and operated as community enterprises. Construction jobs, career opportunities in health services and the satisfaction of a vital social need are among the important benefits that can be gained from a coordinated development approach.

Changes of this magnitude will not occur

without enormous efforts on the part of the Lower East Side community.

Investment in facilities, infrastructure and management must be judged not only from the point of view of private gains, but for their value in adding to resident income and purchasing power, establishing jobs where advancement and personal growth are possible and helping meet social priorities. Achieving these objectives will take an unusual degree of coordination, political persuasion and ability to secure and link the necessary investment and programs. A community-based economic development corporation would be the best vehicle to help transform the local economic environment and prepare individuals for competition in the wider labor market.

12. JOBS AND INCOME

SUMMARY

Residents of the Lower East Side derive their income from three main sources: employment, welfare assistance and Social Security and similar grants. About sixty percent of the area's households rely upon employment for their main source of income with the remaining forty percent, essentially those without a wage earner, depending upon welfare, Social Security and related benefits. Local welfare rolls have risen considerably to the point where an estimated 14 to 17 thousand households now derive their income mainly from public assistance whereas in 1967 only 11,400 relied on this source.

Based on 1960 data most of the resident labor force has lower paid jobs requiring little training and education and offering limited chances for advancement in income and status. Only about one out of eight workers had professional or managerial positions, whereas about seven out of ten had service or unskilled jobs. As in the local economic base, manufacturing is the main source of employment, absorbing four out of ten workers. Following from the occupational and industrial distribution of the labor force, incomes are low; almost half of the families (47 percent) earn less than \$6,000 a year.

The main labor force problem is not unemployment, which was about 11 percent in 1960, but sub-employment--employable men who are working at less than their capacity or are working full-time but are unable to earn enough to support their families and who represent about another 20 to 25 percent of the labor force. Training and assistance programs should be directed at the low paid, low skilled job holder and seek to give the minority groups who are overrepresented in these categories an equitable share of the city's better paid, higher status jobs.

A changing city labor market will provide large numbers of white collar and service jobs at a variety of skill levels, many not even requiring a high school education. However, because they lack skills, have inadequate education and poor job experience, the Lower East Side workers will not be able to share in the city's changing labor market to the degree that they should to achieve the income and occupational gains they need.

New models in training and placement must be sought. Long term educational and human resource development programs and short-term efforts geared to specific job opportunities must be established. Such programs must

differentiate between, for example, the needs and expectations of older members of the labor force trapped in low paid, low status jobs and younger workers without family commitments and confining employment experience. Introducing Lower East Siders into a labor market that increasingly emphasizes literate white collar and service jobs will require changes in the credentials that are usually accepted for job entry, enhanced prestige for such jobs and the opportunities for educational and employment experiences.

The previous chapter distinguished between that income and employment produced by enterprises based in the Lower East Side and generated by the workers living in the community. Despite the importance of developing economic enterprises within the community as a way of securing jobs and gaining a measure of control over its economic destiny, the great share of income and employment accruing to the Lower East Side will continue to be produced by residents working in the larger city and regional economy. The extent to which residents come to possess the skills and opportunities to compete and succeed in the mainstream economy will determine, to a large degree, the economic future of the community.

In the context of the sources of resident income, this chapter considers their prospects for improving their income and advancing in the metropolitan labor market. The status of the resident labor force is assessed again in the emerging characteristics of the city's labor market and employment trends. Implications for the local labor force in terms of openings and the need for manpower and training assistance are also discussed.

TABLE 42

Distribution of Labor Force
By Industry, 1960

Industry	Number	Percent
Manufacturing and Construction	24,213	41.3
Retail and Wholesale Sales	14,431	24.6
Private Services	15,247	26.1
Public Services	4,732	8.0
Total	58,623(a)	

(a) Not included are 12,000 unclassified workers.

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Most households in the Lower East Side do not receive income sufficient to maintain a decent standard of living. In examining their economic status two things seem to be important: the sources of income and its adequacy.

SOURCES OF INCOME

Residents of the Lower East Side derive their income from three main sources: wages and salaries, welfare assistance and social Security and related public and private benefits. Of the 69,000 households now living in the community, an estimated 14 to 17 thousand of them derive their income primarily from the various types of welfare assistance, between 12 and 15 thousand mainly from Social Security and similar benefits and the remainder from wages and salaries. Not more than sixty percent of the Lower East Side's families depend upon employment for the bulk of their income. Furthermore, at any given time, and especially in today's economy, a substantial number of the workers in these families are either unemployed or working at a level below their abilities and expectations.

EMPLOYMENT

By far the most important single source of income is the wages and salaries paid to the over 68,000 members of the labor force living on the Lower East Side.

As Table 41 indicates, the majority of the residents included in the labor force have jobs requiring relatively little training and education. In 1960, only one out of every eight workers had a professional or managerial position, whereas about seven out of ten workers were classified in the service or low paid white collar and unskilled categories. Table 42 presents the labor force by industrial category. As in the economic base, manufacturing is important to the Lower East Side, employing four out of ten workers. Private services in

for example business ranked second in importance. Table 43 gives an idea of the distribution of occupations by income groups in 1963. Predictably, the professional and managerial category has the highest proportion of high paying jobs (almost sixty percent pay over \$6,000 a year), while the service and unskilled categories contain the largest concentrations of low wage jobs. The service, clerical and sales category, which provides almost four out of ten jobs, is particularly interesting. Though these jobs are generally classified as "white collar," they are not necessarily high-wage positions. As the table shows, almost four out of five of the workers in this category earn less than six thousand dollars a year.

WELFARE ASSISTANCE

Welfare assistance, the second largest source of resident income, has grown considerably in recent years. As Table 44 shows in 1967 almost thirty thousand people, constituting slightly over eleven thousand families, received all or most of their income from public assistance. This included 6,875 adults and 17,824 children in families with children, the great majority of whom received their income through the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) welfare program, and 5,415 families without children who received funds mainly through the Old Age Assistance and Aid to the Disabled categories. Compared to the total resident population, about one out of six households received all or most of their income from public assistance.

In the three years since the data in Table 44 was compiled, the number of New York City residents receiving public assistance increased by about fifty percent and the number receiving AFDC grew by over forty percent. If the Lower East Side experienced the same rate of growth it would mean that over forty-five thousand people, or almost one-quarter of the total population is now receiving all or most of their income from public welfare. It would also mean that over eight thousand families with children containing a total of 25,000 children are now supported through public

TABLE 41

Occupational Distribution
Of the Labor Force, 1960

Occupation	Number	Percent
Professional and Managerial	8,519	12.4
Craftsmen	5,547	8.2
Service, Clerical, and Sales	26,441	38.5
Operatives and Laborers	20,310	29.8
Unemployed	7,650	11.1
Total	68,467	100.0

Source: 1960 U. S. Census of Population

Distribution of Labor Force by Income and Occupation, 1963

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Percentage of Households</u>		
	<u>Annual Income Group</u>		
	<u>Less Than \$4,000</u>	<u>\$4,000 to \$6,000</u>	<u>\$6,000 and Over</u>
Professional and Managerial	21.2	19.4	59.4
Craftsmen	24.6	44.2	31.2
Service, Clerical and Sales	35.7	42.7	21.6
Operatives and Laborers	35.2	35.5	29.3
Unemployed	81.1	15.6	3.3

Source: Tri-State Transportation Commission, Home Interview Survey, 1963-64

assistance. It should also be remembered that perhaps only six out of ten people eligible for public assistance are actually receiving grants. If these people exercised their eligibility, the total welfare rolls on the Lower East Side could climb to about 75,000 persons, or forty percent of the population.

Total annual welfare assistance to the Lower East Side is estimated at 50 million dollars; 35 to 40 million for families with children and the remainder for families without children. Geographically, welfare dependency is concentrated in four Health Areas (see pages 14-16) between Avenue B/Clinton Street and the East River. In Health Area 67, for example, almost thirty percent of the residents received public assistance, while in adjacent Health Area 63 more than twenty percent were aided in this fashion.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND PENSIONS

Over 23,000 elderly people live on the Lower East Side, the majority on incomes of less than \$4,000 a year. An estimated fifteen to twenty percent receive public assistance in the form of Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind and

Aid to the Disabled. Most live on limited Social Security payments, earnings and, in the case, for example, of retired trade union members, a large number of whom reside in the older union-sponsored housing, also on pensions. As noted in Chapter 2, the problems of the elderly go beyond inadequate income and are rooted in the basic social and morphological changes that have taken place in the Lower East Side and in the national society.

ADEQUACY OF INCOME

Table 7 shows how deeply embedded in poverty are the Lower East Side households; in 1963-64 very close to half of them earned less than \$4,000 a year. In current terms, at the minimum wage level, which is not uncommon for many residents in service and unskilled trades, a full-time worker will earn only \$3200 annually. This is only about \$400 above the Federal poverty threshold for an urban family of three (the nearest average size for all Lower East Side families), but almost \$400 below the subsistence level for a family of four, the typical size of Puerto Rican and non-white households in the community. It should also be noted that a Lower East Side family of four

TABLE 44

Number of Families and Persons Receiving Public Assistance
by Health Area, 1967

<u>Health Area</u>	<u>Families with Children</u>		<u>Families without Children</u>		<u>Total for All Families</u>	
	<u>Families</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Persons</u>
62	400	1411	567	581	967	1992
63	672	2712	438	549	1110	3261
65	400	1579	674	689	1074	2268
66	579	2100	588	604	1167	2704
67	1184	4601	698	728	1882	5329
74	676	2768	738	764	1414	3532
76	1172	4847	823	854	1995	5701
78	570	2633	541	557	1111	3190
80	330	1508	348	359	678	1867
5983	24,159	5415	5685	11,398	29,844	

Source: Distribution of Cases and Persons Receiving Public Assistance by Program and Health Area, Department of Social Services, Bureau of Fiscal Administration, July, 1967

under the AFDC program now receives about \$3,800 a year, more than both the minimum annual wage level and the poverty threshold.

Puerto Rican and white households seem to be most deeply affected by low incomes, the former group because they are growing in importance and typically have larger families and lower incomes than white and non-white families. Thus, the 1964 New York City Population Health Survey revealed that Puerto Rican families had an annual median income of \$4,128, in contrast to \$5,566 for non-whites and \$6,908 for white families. White families are seriously affected by low incomes because a large portion of them are composed of older persons living on public assistance, Social Security or pensions. Non-white families occupy a middle ground; receiving higher incomes than comparable Puerto Rican families, but somewhat less than the average, and typically smaller, white households. More recently, the problems faced by the Puerto Rican households are being shared by a growing Chinese population also characterized by large, low-income families.

If income is measured against the actual cost of maintaining a decent standard of living, most residents of the Lower East Side are in drastically poor circumstances. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in the spring of 1970, a family of four living in the New York Metropolitan Area needed a gross annual income of \$7,183 to maintain itself at a "low" standard of living and \$12,134 for a "moderate" level of living. Assuming that median income for Lower East Side families was \$5,000 in 1970, half the families would still need over \$2,000 in additional income to maintain even a low standard of living and over \$7,000 more to attain a moderate level. About seven out of ten resident families earned less than they needed to maintain even a low standard of living in 1970. For the average family it would take a 40 percent increase in annual income to maintain the low standard and a 140 percent gain to reach the moderate level. Moreover, in the present economy, their budgets are increasing at a rate of 8 to 10 percent a year, which is considerably higher than the rate of income growth for most residents.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

Two types of households can be distinguished in terms of income status and prospects for future improvement: households with employable adults (preferably men) and households lacking employable adults. In approximately 8,500 households with children receiving public assistance, not more than 1,000 adults could be considered employable. Moreover, a good number of them have health, emotional and psychological problems that would seriously limit their ability to hold a full-time job and only a few hundred are men. If many workers (obviously mainly women) are to come

from these families, it will require a large and sensitive day-care effort and new programs in medical and mental health.* At least an additional 20,000 households are composed of adults who are disabled or must be excluded from the labor force because of age or because they are caring for other people. Therefore, an estimated 28,500, or 90 percent of the households living on the Lower East Side do not include an employable adult.

In considering ways to improve income, different opportunities and incentives are appropriate to each group. Thus, benefits predicated on employment, such as social security and unemployment insurance cannot aid persons, such as the thousands of adults in families receiving public welfare who have not had steady employment at good wages. For the four out of ten resident households who are not able to increase their income themselves, the government will have to provide an adequate minimum income. However, about sixty percent of the community's households still depend on the labor market for their income. Low educational attainment, the lack of marketable skills, poor work habits and attitudes, health problems and family situations and the reality of the labor market in New York City contribute to the relatively low income. (In comparison, for example, to the amount needed for even a basic standard of living) earned by most of them.

EARNINGS AND SKILLS

In his 1968 report, Manpower Problems in New York City, Abraham Burstein estimates that 49 percent of the Negro labor force and 60 percent of New York's Puerto Rican workers are in low-skilled, low-paid occupations, while only 30 percent of the white workers hold these kinds of jobs. A view of future requirements confirms this situation. Thus, while only one-third of ghetto residents across the city held white collar jobs in 1968, such jobs will account for two-thirds of all jobs to be filled in New York City between 1965 and 1975. As one of the city's major poverty areas, the Lower East Side shares this inequity in the distribution of occupations and skills. In 1969, the median wage in manufacturing, which employs almost 40 percent of the resident labor force, was \$2.90 an hour in New York City, about \$5,800 a year. For the apparel and allied trades, which is probably the largest single employer of residents, the annual wage is \$5,200 while, for the important retail trade category, it is less than \$5,000.

A view of educational levels does not indicate a high level of labor force preparation for the competitive world of work. According to Tables 9 and 10 (pages 15 and 16) in 1960 62.6 percent of the city's population 25 years and older had less than a high school education.

*In considering the extent to which women can support families, it should be noted that in 1969, Puerto Rican women (who comprise the largest share of the adults in Lower East Side families with children receiving public assistance) working full-time in New York averaged only \$83 a week in gross pay while men averaged \$105. As this is hardly a sufficient working wage to support a family, supplementary assistance would still be required even if these women were able to work full-time.

In the lower East Side, however, 7.85 percent had not reached this level of attainment, with the figure running over eighty percent in two of the nine health areas.

Despite their low educational attainments, there should still be enough jobs available over the long-run for local residents. In fact, a recent study noted that about three-quarters of the jobs to be filled by new entrants in New York State will require no more than a high school diploma and almost one-third will be available to high-school dropouts.^{*} However, what is needed is not simply jobs, but jobs with a future, with a salary sufficient to provide a decent living and a chance for advancement. The low-paid, low-status jobs now held by most lower East Side workers, and that will be too readily available in the 1970's, will not provide that future.

EMPLOYMENT LEVELS

In a sense, New York's and the Lower East Side's labor force problem is not the unemployed--those who are actively looking for a decent job. Rather, the sub-employed workers, those compelled to accept low-paying, dead-end jobs because they cannot find anything else or have simply stopped looking, are the people who need first attention in manpower and training assistance. Traditional unemployment levels of the Lower East Side have consistently been higher than the city-wide average. As Table 41 indicates, the local unemployment rate was about 11 percent in 1960 while it was about 5 percent for the entire city. Among non-white men living in the Lower East Side, it was 6.9 percent, while for Puerto Rican men it was 12.7 percent. A Department of Labor study in 1963 noted that in ten of the census tracts comprising the Lower East Side, the male unemployment rate was at least double the city-wide level and, for some categories, was four and five times the New York City average. All together, these areas represented about forty percent of the Lower East Side population and consisted of tracts with large non-white and Puerto Rican populations. More recent surveys, in 1968-69, in poverty areas similar to the Lower East Side, confirmed these findings and revealed a continuing severe problem for Puerto Rican men and for all teenagers.

SUB-EMPLOYMENT

The November, 1966, study of employment in the poverty areas of eight large cities added a new and significant term to the vocabulary of labor economics--sub-employment.^{**} This concept includes, in addition to the traditional unemployment index, those who are actively looking for work and unable to find it, those who are working only part-time but seeking full-time work, men who are working full-time but earning less than the poverty level, an estimate of male non-participants in the labor force (men who were not working, not looking for work, not in school and not in the Armed Forces) and, finally, an estimate of the male undercount which normally appears in ghetto population surveys. The 1966 study revealed that the sub-employment rates for Central Harlem, East Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant were 78.6, 33.5 and 27.6 respectively, whereas the

average traditional unemployment rate was about 7.5 percent. Though the Lower East Side may not be comparable to the above areas, and in fact may rank lower in some measurements of poverty, it is probably safe to assume that the sub-employment levels would be about the same. Therefore, for each male resident of the Lower East Side classified as unemployed in the usual sense, there are two more who are not adequately employed. Based upon 1960 figures, in addition to the 7,650 unemployed, there would be an additional fifteen thousand residents in need of employment assistance. The sub-employment index reflects more than any other statement the low wages, irregular employment and job-related individual and family difficulties faced by many Lower East Side workers.

OTHER FACTORS

Although it is difficult to measure, discrimination undoubtedly plays a part in denying residents opportunities to enter and succeed in the economy. Lower East Siders, especially the minorities, are concentrated in low-skilled, low wage occupations that offer little chance for income gains and personal status. While discrimination may be of lesser importance in entry level jobs in these occupations, it does effect opportunities for advancement and the degree to which particular industries, especially some of the growing private service industries such as finance and communications, will give minorities a chance to compete. Training and upgrading programs geared to growth sectors of the economy will be ineffective unless there is an adequate supply of jobs available to absorb the minority workers. Recent reports have focussed on another very disquieting feature in the income-status picture. Just as the most important factor in predicting educational success seems to be family social and economic background, it may well be that long term occupational chances and income may be more dependent on social class position rather than individual preparation and acquired skills. The implications of this situation are considerable; for it may mean that many members of the minority working generation, especially those with family commitments, will be denied a real chance to participate in the mainstream economy at a level equivalent to their abilities.

THE CHANGING LABOR MARKET

Because so many (over five out of six) Lower East Side residents work outside the area, the long term trends and changes in the New York City labor market will have a significant impact on the kinds of job opportunities that the local labor has now and will have in the future.

Between 1963 and 1968, almost 200,000 jobs were added to New York City payrolls.^{*} In 1968, the number of jobs increased by 71,000 and in 1969 by 86,000 the largest increase on record. These impressive gains have not, however, been evenly spread throughout the metropolitan economy. On the gain side, the service and non-manufacturing sectors have

^{*}Herbert Blenstock, *City Almanac*, New School for Social Research. Reported in The New York Times, January 17, 1971.

^{**}Sub-Employment in the Slums of New York, United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1967.

^{*}Data in this sub-section is from Changing Patterns of Employment, Income and Living Standards in New York City, addresses given by Herbert Blenstock of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics to the Economic Education Institute in April, 1968, 1969 and 1970.

shown the largest increases. During the 1960's, local government added about 135,000, over half in public education. Private, non-manufacturing (i.e., white collar) jobs have grown dramatically, especially in the last few years. During the 1958-68 period, the business services category increased by about 75,000 jobs. This group included such functions as maintenance, advertising, credit and management services. Medical and health services added another 55,000 jobs during the decade. Finally, 20,000 new jobs came from service category which includes securities, non-governmental, education, banks and non-profit agencies.

During the same period, manufacturing jobs decreased by about 90,000. The largest declines were registered in apparel manufacturing, food processing and contract construction. Apparel, the most important industry in the local economic base and an important source of semi-skilled jobs for Lower East Side residents continued its decline in 1969, losing 5,000 more jobs and raising its cumulative loss for the decade to 34,000 jobs. Even with these losses, the apparel industry had 224,000 jobs in 1969, or better than one in four manufacturing jobs in the city. To some extent, long-run declines in manufacturing have halted with only insignificant declines recorded in the past few years.

What is most revealing about these trends is that the largest proportion of new jobs was found in the white collar category. Of the 110,000 jobs added to the New York City labor market between 1964 and 1967, four out of every five were white collar positions. Although the total job gains were considerable, the benefits did not necessarily accrue to those who needed work the most. In the Lower East Side and similar communities, large numbers of workers with little education, few skills, and poor work attitudes only benefited slightly from the city's changing job structure. The disparity between the skills of the unemployed and the requirements of available jobs are illustrated by the following: In 1966 only 14 percent of the unemployed persons in the city's slum areas were qualified in white collar jobs while 44 percent of the city's vacancies were in white collar positions.

Data gathered during the 1960's also highlights the widening gap between the location of manufacturing jobs and the residence of people who are oriented towards blue collar work. Thus, during 1964-65, 75 percent of all industrial building in the region occurred outside New York City, while 82 percent of office construction, with its white collar jobs took place in the city, mainly in Manhattan.

RECOMMENDATIONS & POLICIES

Policies for achieving economic security must deal both with families where there is (or can be) a wage earner and families where there is no prospect of increased income through earnings. For families with inadequate income in the former category this means education, training and employment, while for the latter income maintenance approaches must be used.

LABOR MARKET TRENDS

For the approximately six out of ten families in the Lower East Side for whom employment-oriented approaches are appropriate, the state of the city's labor market will be an important factor in their ability to secure jobs. It is estimated that a total of about 424,000 job openings will occur in New York City between 1970 and 1975.* The most important source of positions for entrants into labor force will not come from new jobs, but rather from the replacement of older workers who retire or die. This latter source will generate almost nine out of ten new job openings.

In terms of new jobs, manufacturing is expected to continue its decline, losing almost 55,000 jobs by 1975. Private services is predicted to add about 74,000 new job openings, while government will add about 31,000 new workers to its payrolls. (It should be remembered that these projections were made prior to the current recession.) Of the 424,000 total job openings, about three-quarters will be in the white collar and related service categories with the remainder in the blue collar occupations. Despite the number of blue collar openings, there will be competition for them in the city's poverty areas and many may be in industries with low wage scales and little opportunity for advancement.

In assessing the effect of current and future labor market trends upon the Lower East Side a number of factors should be considered. First, the occupational distribution of the Lower East Side does not compare favorably with Manhattan and the city, basically, the area has a higher share of blue collar workers (i.e., operatives and laborers) and people in the lower paid retail trade and personal service trades.** Second, the manufacturing sector, which absorbed almost 4 out of 10 workers in 1960, is expected to continue declining in the region and especially in Manhattan. Third, the vast majority of future jobs will be the public and private non-manufacturing sector. A great share of these jobs will be white collar openings for which many Lower East Side residents lack the education, skills, and experience.

*Data in this sub-section are from Manpower Challenge of the 1970's in New York City, United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, October, 1968.

**A 1966 State Department of Commerce survey found that very close to half the workers in retailing and personal services earned less than \$70 a week, while in business services, for example, only 30 percent earned less than this amount.

MANPOWER AND JOB DEVELOPMENT

Manpower and training programs for the Lower East Side must recognize labor market trends in the city and the characteristics of the local labor force. Puerto Rican, Negro and Chinese residents and, probably, a surprising number of middle-aged and older whites tend to be concentrated in low skilled, low wage occupations in industries that do not have a promising role in the city's future economy. For these people, the eventual goal should be representation in the city's income and occupational structures proportional to their share of the population. If the goal is to give all groups an equitable share of the city's economic benefits, the emphasis shifts from simply aiding the unemployed to the large number of workers, many of whom are now classified as "sub-employed" who have poor jobs and low wages.

It is likely that training and manpower programs will have to reflect basic variations in labor market trends and local labor force characteristics. Although the city's labor market is changing gradually in a direction that could be beneficial to residents of the Lower East Side--i.e., by emphasizing the better pay and higher status white collar and service positions over many older workers who are already embedded in dead-end low-paying jobs will be unable to capitalize upon these changes. On the other hand, there are younger prospective wage earners on the Lower East Side who can invest in longer term training and preparation that could assure them a good job in a changing economy and allow them to overcome the potent limitations of social and economic background. The shape this might take could be two pronged: structured training programs leading to qualification for an occupation in the present labor market for older workers and longer term intensive educational development programs that would aim to improve attitudes and general skills of younger people, with minimal family commitments for later more flexible entry into the burgeoning white collar world. Such programs geared to different worker and labor market situations could be operated by the indigenous economic development corporation in conjunction with

local and city-wide industries. Young workers are likely to be the main hope for breaking the depressing cycle of inherited poorly paid, low reward jobs.

If this is to be accomplished, there will have to be substantial changes in education and occupational mobility. The emphasis on educational credentials will have to be lessened for entry into jobs, there will have to be opportunity for education and training at many points in the job scale and the status of certain jobs, especially at the entry level, will have to be improved. Just as education will have to offer adult schools, expanded on-the-job training and stipends for people with families the world of work will have to change to accommodate a more extended and richer mixture of work and education and alternative paths for people to rise through combinations of jobs and education.

INCOME MAINTENANCE

In its report in 1969, the President's Commission on Income Maintenance Programs concluded that that it is necessary to give a "universal income supplement program financed and administered by the Federal government, making payments based on income needs to all members of the population." Income maintenance programs could take a variety of forms: universal payment (guaranteed annual income), direct payment to specific groups without a means test, such as under the Social Security system, negative income to a certain level and direct cash grants in the form of a family allowance. The critical point is that four out of ten families in the Lower East Side, ranging from thousands of elderly individuals living on small Social Security grants to large young families receiving public assistance, do not have enough to live on and cannot increase their incomes themselves. They are condemned to lives of penury and despair unless some outside changes are made. The President's Commission defined the kind of economic security that they need; the Family Assistance Plan is a modest beginning in that direction.

13. SPECIAL PLANNING STUDIES

SUMMARY

With a thorough study of the several singular areas that were of planning attention. Some of these, such as Fara D. Roosevelt Parkway, have been discussed in previous chapters. Two of them--the Bowery and the East River Park--represent major opportunities for regaining resources on the Lower East Side and have been studied in some detail. The results of these explorations are presented in the present chapter.

THE BOWERY

The report illustrates the confidence that the Bowery, despite its current depressed condition, can become once again the important street that it was a century ago. The proposal is not simply a reversion to the past, however, rebuilding the Bowery as a light industrial and residential area is proposed for the next two decades.

The Bowery and its environs offer at present a most ready prospect for renewal. As a thoroughfare the Bowery is not only a vital part of the neighborhood but is a section of the major links between Manhattan and Brooklyn, leading from the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges, and connecting the downtown civic area with the East Side. It has a steady flow of traffic--charted in detail below--which demonstrates its integral role in the area, and points the way to future change.

At the moment the Bowery area is host to a varied cluster of activities: light industry and warehousing, small theatres and avant-garde shops, AIR's (Artist-in-Residence) lofts, home-escapism (giving the Bowery its "skid-row" reputation), Chinatown, and the following group of businesses: restaurant equipment suppliers, lighting fixture stores, and jewelers. However, most of the latter activities take up more space than necessary, leaving a large percentage of upper floor space unused. Even in the case of homeless men, the number of lodging-house beds available exceeds the demand, which is itself on the decline. Building conditions alone necessitate some form of city action; only 27% of the buildings can be classified as sound, or fit for use.

This proposal recommends reuniting some of the important business clusters to new areas

that would satisfy their needs for property, showroom and storage space, and customer parking, thus ensuring their continued flourishing. The resulting space, along with the rest of a general 14-block area bounded by Houston, Chrystie, Canal and Elizabeth Streets, would be redeveloped for light industry and housing. This use, moreover, would help ease the pressure on the adjacent and changing Little Italy and Chinatown communities. It has been shown in other studies that the demand for loft space by certain industries in an area such as the Bowery would be significant; therefore the changes envisioned would help direct the Bowery towards its future role as a major metropolitan business center.

Rebuilding the Bowery should take place in carefully planned phases, providing relocation of the 1,300 resident families and the 300 displaced businesses. Of the 14-block sector, the northern six blocks will be designated as mostly residential, the southern eight blocks as industrial. Housing and industrial development is discussed in detail below. The first step will most likely be construction of 400 low-income housing units on the block bounded by East Houston, Stanton and Chrystie Streets. In about a year, as outlined in Stage I of the vest pocket program, within the next three years industrial redevelopment should begin on the two blocks bounded by Delancey, Chrystie and Grand Streets and the Bowery.

A number of specific studies, namely, in transportation, economic potential, space requirements of new industry, and community development, should be undertaken immediately with the goal of a 20-year Bowery revitalization plan.

THE EAST RIVER PARK

In view of the scarcity of land on the Lower East Side and the pressing demands for housing, one of the most acceptable ways to solve the problem of insufficient park space is to redesign the presently neglected East River Park. Although it is now underused, poorly laid out, badly maintained and unsafe, the park has the potential for becoming a vital and attractive recreation center for the neighborhood, and even for the surrounding metropolis.

Its 57 acres of open space, location on the river, and shape (making it adjacent to most of the community), are three of the factors to be exploited in redesigning the park. The specific proposals for change in the discussion below are concentrated on making the park more accessible, and making its activities more varied and more appealing to the community. When, through these improvements,

the park is more heavily used at all hours. The problem of security will not be a deterrent to local residents, as it currently is.

A series of new pedestrian bridges to the park from local streets is proposed. These bridges will link the park with major residential blocks, as well as with Jacob Rius Houses and Lillian Wald Houses, and will be an attractive invitation to prospective park users. Moreover, entry to the park for automobiles coming from the FDR Drive, as well as parking in the presently useless northern and southern ends of the park, will be added for visitors. The City's recently-approved new subway line and bus routes will also have a stop near the Park, fitting in very well with the suggested renovations.

As a result of observation of park use over a period of months, recommendations were arrived at for renovating certain areas and replacing others with more desirable activities. One of the major proposals is a new elementary school to be built on the practice fields opposite Houston Street, replacing P.S. 198 and P.S. 97. The overwhelming advantages of this move would be avoiding any displacement of families, and creating a lively, youthful center for the park, thereby drastically altering its present image. Other significant new facilities will be a swimming pool opposite Cortlandt Hook Park, a badly-needed addition to this crowded neighborhood, and a skating rink near the new school, also long-awaited by the residents. Proposed facilities also include a bicycle path, a Mother Goose maze, and a picnic grove.

Easy access to the park through new bridges and motor ramps, and rebuilding in accordance with the predilections of its users, in addition to increased police patrols and better floodlighting, should effectively transform it into an active, sought-after gathering place for the adjacent community.

THE BOWERY

PRESENT STATUS, PURPOSE AND CONDITIONS

Despite its contemporary image as New York's "skid row," the Bowery has played a notable role in the city's history. Originally laid out when New York was known as New Amsterdam, the Bouwerie (Dutch for "farm") Road during the colonial era became an important route between the city's downtown mercantile center and the uptown residential districts. Later, in the second third of the nineteenth century, the Bowery became one of New York's most fashionable streets, culminating in the elegant Colonnade Row near the present Astor Place. Scattered remnants of the Bowery's past glory remain; four of the town houses of Colonnade Row can still be seen,

suggesting the "fron urban a d u r e e" qualities of the original group.

The present state of the Bowery exemplifies the pace of change that New York imposes on its urban districts. Now instead of handsome town houses, the Bowery presents a cluster of small theaters, art studios, various mercantile enterprises and, of course, the nation's classic "skid row." The isolation of the Bowery from nearby residential and commercial districts, the age and accumulated grime of its buildings, the pervasive griminess of the atmosphere interwoven with uninviting business establishments, merge to produce a depressed and depressing neighborhood. In a sense, though, its present state contains the seeds for rebuilding the Bowery and re-integrating it into the city's structure. Superbly positioned on the city's transit and roadway systems, connecting the downtown civic and office district with the East Side, the Bowery is one of the most accessible yet unrealized sections of the metropolis. The enterprises that are there now, more out of persistence and tradition than necessity, have few employees and occupy only a portion of the available building space, leaving sizable blocks where guided redevelopment could begin. In the following pages the conditions and opportunities offered by the Bowery form the basis for thinking about its future.

Separating two old residential districts, the Lower East Side to the east and Little Italy to the west, the Bowery remains an active though shabby center of trade and accommodations for the metropolis. There is a minimum of interchange, however, between the Bowery and the nearby residential precincts. This fact is crucial to understanding its present and future role. For example, not one of the stores between Canal and East Fourth Streets provides convenience shopping. In fact most of the blocks between these streets, especially between Canal, Houston and Chrystie Streets, are totally unrelated to the nearby community. This lack of interchange extends to the personnel in the Bowery's establishments; very few of the owners or workers live in the nearby residential areas.

The Bowery district is host to a multitude of activities in its one-mile length. Running from north to south the activities can be characterized as follows:

Entertainment and Education. At the northern end of the Bowery a cluster of activities is centered around Cooper Square and St. Marks Place. They include educational institutions and a variety of specialized commercial and theatrical enterprises. Cooper Union and to a lesser extent New York University compose the educational domain, there are numerous off and off-off-Broadway theaters and workshops. In addition to the fairly new and exotic shops along St. Marks Place.

Although most of these activities are concentrated above East Fourth Street, several of the theaters are below it on the Bowery, including the Inner Theatre, the Bouwerie Lane Theater, the Astor Opera and the Public Theatre on Lafayette Street. Both the educational and theatrical sectors have been growing recently and are expected to continue growing in the near future.

These attractions, along with the advent of the Cooper Square Urban Renewal project, will have a critical effect on the Bowery and its surroundings. Many of the present enterprises, such as theaters, lodging houses and artists' studios, are economically fragile and could easily be squeezed out by rapid changes in activities and land and space values. In Cooper Square, renewal planning and execution will have to be carefully conducted if the various forces emergent in the area are to be accommodated.

Light Industry and Warehousing: Within a triangular area bounded by Lafayette Street, the Bowery and Bleecker Street, there is an extension of the industrial district below Houston Street. The area contains old (some very old indeed) loft buildings used for light manufacturing, wholesaling and warehousing.

Although this industrial triangle is quite active and the home of some major enterprises, such as Hartz Mountain Products (animal food and supplies) and Carl Fisher (music publishers), it is nonetheless under pressure from several directions. From the north and west, the land needs of Cooper Union and New York University are evident, while from the north, east and west come pressure for site assemblage for high-rise apartments. In the competition for land that may well engulf this area within the decade, the city will have to balance the loss of inexpensive loft space, businesses and jobs with gains from providing housing for an array of needy groups.

Restaurant Equipment Suppliers and Allied Industries: Of the several important business activities along the Bowery, far and away the most prominent are the suppliers of restaurant equipment and related items. About 100 of the 205 storefronts along the Bowery north of Canal Street are used by this group. This category includes, in addition to the restaurant equipment suppliers themselves, businesses supplying chinaware, glassware and silverware, as well as furniture, bars and showcases.

The Bowery constitutes, as it has for decades, the main regional center for this business, the importance of each segment varying within the total market. Although a detailed survey of this industry group has not been attempted, general impressions have been gathered through interviews with several proprietors. The typical enterprise is small, consisting of an active proprietor(s) and perhaps four to five employees with various skills and responsibilities. Total employment in these trades is estimated at 500, almost forty percent of all jobs in the heart of the Bowery district. Establishments tend to have been at their present locations for a considerable time, with many of the proprietors in business for decades. Few, if any, of the owners and employees live in the Lower East Side.

The operation of these firms is somewhat inefficient. The street floor is used both for work (i.e., repairing used equipment) and sales, while loading and unloading is done mainly by hand at the curb. Because of the weight of some of the equipment and the absence of elevators, the upper floors are often unavailable for storage. Therefore storage space, although apparently not as vital as in the lighting fixture business, is frequently in a different building.

Local proprietors feel that business has improved over the years, probably as a result of the regional growth in restaurants and kindred establishments. However, the sales increase appears to have been absorbed by the existing establishments rather than spawning more of them. Although some establishments have steady customers, most depend on the individual "walk-in" client. The proximity of these establishments to each other and their collective ability to offer "comparison shopping" to customers is a critical condition of their success.

Lighting Fixtures: A second important business group on the Bowery is the lighting fixture stores. There are 22 of them, concentrated between Delancey and Grand Streets, using about ten percent of all storefronts. The lighting fixture enterprises share many features with the restaurant equipment suppliers: their establishments are generally of modest size; they cater to both steady and "walk-in" clients; their market covers the entire metropolitan region; and concentration is vital to their prosperity.

There are, however, some distinctions. The lighting industry requires more showroom space and frequently uses the basement and/or second floor for display purposes. In addition, it requires more accessible storage space so that items can be kept on hand for customers. As buyers generally carry their purchases with them, nearby parking is an important requirement.

Jewelry: The downtown jewelry center, the second largest in the city, is centered on Canal Street extending both east and west of the Bowery, as well as along the Bowery. This retail and manufacturing cluster has recently been declining on the Lower East Side, doubtless losing some of its entrepreneurs and customers to the expanding midtown center. Not unlike the lighting fixture industry, the retail jewelers are generally small enterprises, patronized by "walk-in" trade, and highly dependent upon propinquity for their common survival. And, as with other economic activities along the Bowery, their relationship to the community around them is minimal. Again, a pressing concern is adequate parking for their customers.

Chinatown: The southern section of the Bowery, between Canal Street and Chatham Square, is generally considered the eastern limit of Chinatown. Long established as the largest Chinese community on the East coast, this area is experiencing a population and economic explosion of extraordinary magnitude. Owing to recent changes in the immigration law, an annual influx of up to 5,000 Chinese immigrants is, in the words of a recent report, "threatening to overwhelm the Chinatown area." Such changes are clearly indicated in the area surrounding Chinatown, as well as within the core, by the influx of new families, the increased number of new or rehabilitated structures, and the new commercial and wholesale establishments.

Among the many observations and recommendations proposed in the report noted above, one most relevant to the general Bowery area is that the Chinese residents need "decent housing in or near Chinatown that is realistically priced in relation to their earning power." Accommodating the current and

anticipated expansion of Chinatown must be one of the guiding goals for change in the Bowery.

Homeless Men: The Bowery has been infamous as New York's "skid row." Although this is still true, there are considerably fewer homeless men now than just a decade ago. Illustrative of this ten-year trend is the closing of about one-third of the lodging houses, a reduction of almost half in the number of homeless men, and the demise of the Trade Group, the Association of Independent Lodging Houses.

In February, 1968, the number of homeless men on the Bowery was around 5,000, representing a decline of about 8,000 in a twenty-year period. In the same month lodging houses and hotels had a capacity of 8,560 beds. However, between 1968 and 1970 the population of homeless men has stopped declining, in fact has increased slightly. This can be correlated in part with the economic situation. In periods of prosperity and low unemployment, the number of homeless men declines, and in periods of recession the opposite is true. It is difficult to say what direction these population figures will take in the next few years. What is certain, however, is that enough lodging house accommodations must be maintained for these men who have nowhere else to go. Moreover the lodging houses must be protected from building speculators who may move in when it becomes apparent that the area is being rehabilitated. The City should make provision for acquiring these lodging houses and placing them in the hands of a group willing to run them, such as the Manhattan Bowery Project, for example.

Artists-In-Residence (AIR): A new form of accommodation is the loft space used by artists for combined living and working quarters. Having been forced out of their Greenwich Village residences by new high-rent apartments, the artists have moved south and east, taking up quarters in a number of areas, particularly in the South Houston industrial area and along the Bowery. In these districts where obsolete loft space abounds, artists are able to rent large living and working space at low prices.

A recent survey along the Bowery counted 35 floors in 17 different buildings registered and posted as legal AIR's. Since there are many lofts used but not registered as AIR's, the actual figure is considerably higher. In response to the strong demand for AIR's, several buildings along the Bowery have been wholly converted to artists' studios and living space. For New York's artist community, often unable to afford separate living and studio space, AIR's offer real advantages--a convenient, large, undivided space (usually 2,000 to 2,500 square feet) in which to live and work at a relatively low rent (\$200 to \$250 per month).

BUILDING CONDITIONS ALONG THE BOWERY

Between Cooper Square and Chatham Square are over two hundred storefronts occupied by a wide variety of businesses, nearly half engaged in the restaurant equipment supply and allied enterprises. The next largest group, eating and drinking places, is for the most part dependent upon patronage from the lodging houses along the Bowery. Another important and active group is the lighting fixture retailers. Other stores sell old

clothes, presumably to the inhabitants of the Bowery, or engage in a variety of wholesale and retail pursuits. The use of storefronts along the Bowery is presented in the table below.

TABLE 4*

Use of Storefronts Along the Bowery

Restaurant Equipment Suppliers	57
Restaurant Equipment: Related	42
Lighting Fixtures	22
Eating and Drinking	41
Old Clothes and Used Goods	8
Gas Stations	7
Sundry	29
Vacant	9
Total	205

Source: Consultant's field survey, Fall, 1969.

In contrast to the active use of the storefronts, the space above the ground floor (an average of three floors) is used much less intensively. About fifteen percent of the 213 commercial buildings are either entirely or more than half vacant above the ground floor, while another thirty percent are used only for storage above the ground floor. Also, an estimated ten percent of the buildings have two or more floors devoted to AIR (artist-in-residence) lofts, a use that would not be attractive to owners if better-paying commercial tenants were available. Thus, while almost all the storefronts are tenanted, in less than half the buildings is the space above the ground floor in full and active use.

Built for the most part during the last century, the Bowery's buildings have served in any number of ways during several generations of change. Their use as AIR's is the latest and perhaps not the last of these adaptations. Between Canal Street and Cooper Square are approximately 235 buildings of which ninety percent are used for business, the remainder being commercial lodging houses.

The structural conditions of buildings along the Bowery are summarized on the accompanying table. There is, however, an element of unreality in such an evaluation. On one hand, the ratings were rather generous. On the other hand, owing to age, generally modest original construction, minimal maintenance over the years, technical obsolescence, such as the absence of elevators and floors with low load-bearing capacity, excessive lot coverage, and the nature of their occupants' activities, it is questionable if there is much life left in these buildings, at least for commercial purposes.

TABLE 46

Building Conditions on the Bowery

Classification	Number	Percent
Sound	62	27.0
Deteriorating	125	53.0
Dilapidated	48	20.0
Total	235	100.0

Source: Consultant's field survey, Fall, 1969.

Notwithstanding the presence of other factors, this distribution is perhaps a basic reason why so few buildings have been or are being rehabilitated. And of the nine buildings now being rehabilitated, six are in Chinatown where the demand for space is unusually strong. While little investment is being made in building improvements, there is evidence to support the contention that owners along the Bowery are holding their properties for speculative reasons. This is being done in the hope that municipal action in the form of urban renewal and the new subway along Second Avenue and Chrystie St. will transform the area from a commercial backwater into a thriving business and residential district, thereby creating a market for their properties.

One of the most striking characteristics of these buildings is the unusually low number of vacant storefronts. There are only nine vacant storefronts (excluding those in vacant buildings), representing a vacancy rate of approximately 4 percent. This is in dramatic contrast to the 15 percent vacancy rate for all ground floors in the Lower East Side below Houston Street. The brisk demand for ground floor space along the Bowery is verified by the inability of existing firms to obtain space for expansion.

By way of contrast, however, the loft space situation along the Bowery is not unlike that throughout the Lower East Side. There 9 percent of the lofts are vacant and 37 percent used for storage, while along the Bowery 30 percent reported only storage above the ground floor and 15 percent were more than half vacant above the storefronts. A recent survey indicated loft rentals along the Bowery of \$1.25 to \$1.50 per square foot, which is consistent with costs for low rent, poor quality space in comparable marginal areas in the city.

THE BOWERY AS A TRAFFIC CORRIDOR

The Bowery is the only wide two-way street (two moving lanes in each direction separated by a median) connecting the downtown civic and business area with Manhattan's East side avenues. Not only does it operate as a north-south corridor, but it carries vehicles coming to and from the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges and distributes traffic to several important east-west streets that traverse Lower Manhattan, e.g., Houston and Canal. Of course, the Bowery is also a loading zone for trucks stopping at the fronting businesses, as well as a source of parking spaces for customers.

The following table gives some idea of the importance of the Bowery as a through and distributor street. As the data indicate, Houston Street, the cluster of Delancey, Broome and Grand Streets, and Canal Street are critical intersections, with the Canal-Bowery intersection the most important. Further evidence of their importance and the hazards created along the Bowery is the fact that two of the three intersections with the highest accident rate in the Lower East Side are at the Bowery and Canal Street and the Bowery and Houston Street.

Along most of its course, the Bowery carries a rather heavy flow of traffic, ranging from over 22,000 vehicles at Cooper Square head-

ing north, to 10,500 below Canal Street going uptown. Between Houston and Canal Street traffic tends to be roughly equal in both directions, but near Cooper Square Park and south of Canal Street, the northerly flows are measurably heavier. At Canal Street the drop-off probably reflects southbound traffic turning on to the Manhattan Bridge, while in Cooper Square the gain could be traffic turning northward onto the Bowery from nearby business districts.

TABLE 47

Traffic Counts for the Bowery and Nearby Selected Streets

<u>Street and Location</u>		<u>Direction</u>		<u>Month and Year</u>
		<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Year</u>
Bowery	S of Canal	10,589	5,876	4/62
	N of Canal	16,849	12,876	7/66
	S of Delancey	13,215	13,667	2/68
	N of Houston	16,090	17,840	7/66
	S of Cooper Park	22,234	15,889	6/66
		<u>East</u>	<u>West</u>	
Canal	W of Bowery	21,087	17,995	7/66
Grand	W of Bowery	8,153	--	1/65
Broome	W of Bowery	--	7,087	6/64
Kenmare	W of Bowery	7,412	10,054	7/66
Delancey	E of Bowery	14,212	11,813	7/63
Houston	E of Bowery	9,147	14,928	11/63

Average daily counts for a 24 hour period.

Source: New York City, Department of Traffic

The importance of the Bowery as a distributor to the East River crossings and other east-west streets is best illustrated at the Canal Street intersection. Northbound traffic on the Bowery is 10,500 vehicles below Canal Street, but north of Canal it jumps to almost 17,00 (left turns are not permitted from Canal to the Bowery). This increase reflects turns off the Bowery onto the Manhattan Bridge, and vehicles coming on to the Bowery after leaving the Bridge. Likewise, the 7,000 vehicle difference in southbound Bowery traffic above and below Canal Street could be attributed to traffic leaving the Bowery at this point for the Bridge.

The highest total volumes (combined east and west counts) crossing the Bowery were recorded at Canal and Delancey Streets, which are direct routes to the Manhattan and Williamsburg Bridges respectively. Houston Street, which connects with the FDR Drive and is the quickest route across Manhattan below 14th Street (three lanes in each direction for most of its length), also carries heavy traffic volumes.

REBUILDING THE BOWERY

At the heart of the Bowery is a fourteen block area bounded by Houston, Chrystie, Canal and Elizabeth Streets. In this region are concentrated most of the activities considered above, and building deterioration and vacancies reach their zenith. If the trends identified above continue, this district will keep declining as a center of trade and specialized services. More lodging houses will close as the population of

homeless men slowly shrinks and low-rent, poor quality loft space will remain under-occupied and neglected by local merchants. Despite the locational and transportation advantages of the district, it is likely, in the absence of outside stimuli, to remain gripped by the same forces that have inhibited change in the industrial and commercial blocks to the west.

North and south of these blocks expectations will be different and changes could reverberate into the core of the Bowery. A resurgent Chinatown is already affecting the stretch of the Bowery below Canal Street, with several buildings being rehabilitated and one new building planned. Investment in Chinatown will probably accelerate, but remain localized below Canal Street unless strong forces, such as neighborhood-wide redevelopment, push it northward. At the north end of the Bowery, near Cooper Square, public intervention in the form of urban renewal will bring needed new housing and community services, but could also upset the delicate local balance which makes it a haven for the homeless.

Although presently blighted by its "skid-row" reputation and captive of an obsolete and neglected physical framework, the core of the Bowery has certain urban features that could spark its regeneration within the next two decades. Advantageously positioned across the approaches to the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges, easily accessible by roadway from other sections of Manhattan, particularly the downtown business and civic districts, and superbly served by three subway lines (with the fourth, the Second Avenue, which will have an important transfer point at Grand Street, scheduled to be built this decade), the area can become a major metropolitan business center.

Opportunities that would encourage rebuilding are also present: existing buildings are ill-suited to the demands of modern business, are generally decrepit (only one out of four are in sound condition) and, except for the storefronts, are extensively underused. One of the two major enterprises, caring for homeless men, is gradually declining and shifting from a private business to a public responsibility. Although the other, the restaurant equipment trade, is prospering, it has operating problems caused by the physical limitations of the buildings and the difficulty of moving goods. Also, the desirability and necessity for its occupying such a prime location must be questioned. Only about 1,300 people work in the fourteen blocks, an extraordinarily low figure for a center city business area. Compared to other marginal business districts, the core of the Bowery offers significant attractions and few impediments to staged rebuilding.

NATURE OF THE REBUILDING PROCESS

Over the next two decades the fourteen Bowery blocks should be redeveloped for light industry and housing. Changing the Bowery will be a gradual and somewhat irregular process accomplished in phases, reflecting circumstances and forces active in each group of blocks or business sector. As is evident from the paucity of renovations, much less any signs of new construction,

little immediate self-induced change can be expected along the Bowery.

Over the next few years the city should help set the stage for more sweeping changes in the full fourteen block area. Several preparatory steps are advisable, for example, encouraging the concentration of common economic activities, such as the restaurant equipment suppliers, and the temporary use of loft space in areas not slated for immediate renewal; establishing the type of lodging, health care and rehabilitative services that will have to be provided even to a residual population of homeless men; and making plans for the eventual relocation of the business clusters along the Bowery.

The fourteen blocks are now occupied by about three hundred businesses, 1,300 resident families, and 18 lodging houses containing 3,000 beds (35 percent of all beds on and near the Bowery). Relocation of these families and establishments will have to be done carefully and gradually over a period of years. Many of the businesses fall into natural clusters and should be offered relocation as a unit if they are to survive. For example, the restaurant equipment suppliers, who are on the Lower East Side out of historical convenience and custom, could function as well in another consolidated location where transportation needs and customer requirements for comparison shopping could be satisfied. As has been done with other trades, such as the produce merchants from the Washington Market who were relocated en masse to the new Hunt's Point Market, the city could encourage the creation of a common market space suitable for groups of firms. Other Bowery trades, such as lighting fixtures and jewelry, do not need as much space nor the loading-unloading facilities of the restaurant equipment suppliers, and could probably afford new or rehabilitated loft and showroom space on the Bowery or its environs.

Over the course of the Bowery's renewal the 1,300 families, predominantly of low income, will be accommodated in existing public housing and new housing that will be provided through the rebuilding of the Lower East Side. Commercial lodging houses will decline with the declining number of homeless men gravitating to the Bowery. More important, though, the types of accommodation, care and restorative services that the men on the Bowery need will increasingly be provided by public and semi-public agencies on a planned, continuous basis rather than episodically through commercial and charitable enterprises.

There is also sufficient space in vacant lofts and storefronts along and right off the Bowery for interim resettlement and consolidation during the first stages of renewal relocation. Many of the existing lofts, especially on the upper floors, are vacant and unsuitable for housing, and could be used, if only on a temporary basis, for AIR studios. There is a real need for artists' quarters and the Bowery has many of the features that the artists are seeking: low rents, convenience, light and space. Given a willing owner, the proper incentives and some encouragement, many of these lofts could be converted into AIRs for a relatively modest sum. Such temporary use of lofts, however, should not obscure the

need for a clear policy and program by the city on housing and studio space for its community of artists.

Rebuilding will soon begin along the Bowery with the construction of low-income housing on the large block bounded by East Houston, Stanton and Chrystie Streets, and the Bowery. As part of Stage I of the vest-pocket program, 400 apartments will be built on the site starting some time next year. Moreover, the Cooper Square Urban Renewal Plan, which is essentially residential in nature, extends along the east side of the Bowery two blocks further south to Delancey Street.

A reasonable division of the fourteen blocks for re-use would be to concentrate residential rebuilding in the northern six blocks (on both sides of the Bowery) between Houston and Delancey Streets, and industrial renewal in the eight southerly blocks between Kenmare-Delancey and Grand Streets. The northern blocks now comprise 13.3 acres which could be increased to 14 acres by absorbing streets into renewal parcels. At an overall zoning of R-8, which a district of this size and locational advantages can certainly support, about 3,100 new apartments averaging 4 1/2 zoning rooms could be built. The southerly blocks which now measure 12.2 acres could be extended to 13.2 acres by street closings. Even at a building space/land ratio of five, about 65 acres of light industrial space could be built. At a gross density of 150 workers per acre a total of 10,000 people could be accommodated in a renewed industrial area. With higher building space and worker densities this could be increased by several thousand.

A comparison of existing and proposed use of the fourteen blocks indicates the magnitude of the housing and job gains that can be attained through comprehensive renewal of the Bowery.

	Existing	Proposed
Units of Housing	1,300	3,100
Number of Jobs	1,300	10,000

A recent study supports the conclusion that there is a market for new loft space on the Lower East Side.*

"There is a growing shortage of quality industrial space in New York City in the 20,000 to 75,000 square foot range. Firms are presently paying \$1.75 to \$2.25 per square foot for well located quality loft space, and will pay even more for space that offers some operating cost savings."

It goes on to state that:

"The Lower East Side, the Lower Bronx, Bedford-Stuyvesant and Harlem are the poverty areas in New York City most suitable for the development of industrial loft space.

*Industrial Loft Development in Low Income Areas of New York City. Prepared for the State of New York, Urban Development Corporation, by Abt Associates, Inc., Cambridge, Mass., 1968.

"Not only are good sites available in each community, but community organizations have expressed a tentative willingness to cooperate in the development of loft space. All four communities need industrial development and employment. All provide the potential labor force resources and locations for successful loft development."

In regard to financing, the report states that:

"Current construction costs and Urban Development Corporation powers of capital attraction permit construction of projects that will rent for \$2.00 - \$2.25 per square foot gross."

It is recommended that the Bowery's commercial and industrial renewal be undertaken by an agency such as the Urban Development Corporation or the city's Public Development Corporation, or by a special body with land assembly, financing and organizational powers as well as the ability to help establish training and employment programs and even institute some form of community direction.

The same report makes the following observations about the market for such space:

"The most desirable potential tenants of the loft industrial space in New York City are firms in the printing and publishing industry, the cosmetics and pharmaceutical part of the chemical industry, the instrument industry, the electrical machinery industry, the textile and apparel industries, and the fabricated metal products industry. Selection of these industries was based on a careful qualitative analysis of each judging their growth rates, employment, wages, value added and nature of their operations in terms of their likely effect on the general city economy and on the welfare of the target community residents."

Within the next three years industrial redevelopment should begin on the two blocks bounded by Delancey, Chrystie and Grand Streets and the Bowery. Comprising about 3.6 acres, including the bed of Hester Street, the site could provide at least 800,000 square feet of floor space, or enough for about 2,700 workers. The new industrial space should be of high quality and permit flexible subdivision. Storage space, indoor unloading facilities, and support services for the employees should be included, as well as sufficient parking to serve the occupants of the building and customers of nearby Grand Street stores.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The two blocks contain about 105 business establishments, most of which are part of the Bowery's commercial clusters. Those that are mobile and prosperous, such as the restaurant equipment suppliers and the

jewelry trade, should be aided in relocating and consolidating in the neighborhood. Vacant storefronts on the Bowery and the more plentiful supply on the side streets can, with some repairs, be used for relocation, as can the loft space in some of the larger buildings now used by the jewelry trade. Relocation of the 250 families, many of them living in some of the worst housing on the Lower East Side, can be accomplished gradually with families moving into existing and new (Stage I vest-pocket housing in Cooper Square) public housing. Three smaller lodging houses, with a total of 300 beds, are also on the two blocks. As the occupancy rate for Bowery lodging house beds is now running close to 55 percent, these beds could be relinquished without inconveniencing their occupants.

Although the first housing scheduled for the Bowery is low-rent public housing, the location and assets of the area, especially near a revived Cooper Square, could support a wide mixture of rent levels among the 3,100 units that can be built.

The Bowery core is bounded on the east and west by old residential districts which will themselves be changing. To the east across from Sara D. Roosevelt Parkway between Chrystie and Essex Streets is a large district of old-law tenements in notably poor condition, intermixed with commercial enterprises. Over the next two decades it will be entirely rebuilt with new housing and public services, such as schools and small parks. The renewal cycle will start by building on the Parkway, which is actually a neglected and lightly-used park and playground one block wide and seven blocks long. The Parkway land will be replaced by a more usable form of recreation space in the interior of the rebuilt community.

West of the Bowery and extending to about Centre-Lafayette Streets is the old neighborhood known as Little Italy. The original Italian enclave in Manhattan, it has, until quite recently, remained self-contained and stable. Its generally well-kept old-law tenements are in considerable demand, with many families having lived in the neighborhood for decades. However, recent changes such as the exodus of the children of many of the older residents and the influx of new groups--Chinese above Canal Street as an overspill from Chinatown and Puerto Ricans below Houston Street--will bring changes in tenancy and neighborhood character over the next years. Although the stability and solidarity of the community will inhibit massive physical change, some redevelopment can be anticipated in selected places over the next decade.

The Bowery core is such a vital section of Manhattan and offers such a unique set of opportunities that it should not be redeveloped without a careful review of the existing circumstances and the possibilities for significant change. Therefore the following specific studies for a Bowery revitalization plan should be undertaken soon, before publicly-inspired change begins on the Bowery.

Transportation: Examine alternatives to the Lower Manhattan Expressway, particularly as they will effect circulation in the Bowery area.

Study desirable changes, consistent with

the larger circulation scheme, in the local street system serving the Bowery district.

Economic: Determine characteristics, location and space needs, employment, and long-term prospects of the major existing industry clusters in the Bowery neighborhood. Explore potential for new industrial and economic activity in the Bowery, including the type of activity, space and facility needs and rent levels, employment, skill and wage levels and growth outlook.

Space for New Activities: Determine specifications of new industrial space, including prototype bulk and plan configuration, development costs, employee and public services, and relation to transportation.

Develop organizational and legal structure for assembling, financing, building and managing new industrial facilities and the role of public and private efforts.

Community Development: Find new opportunities for manpower training and job development within a new industrial structure as well as for income and skill gains for the poorer residents of the community and the city.

Explore opportunities for a community involvement in ownership and management of new industry.

EAST RIVER PARK

PROBLEMS AND GENERAL SOLUTIONS

Although the Lower East Side is seriously deficient in parks, as is all of Lower Manhattan, the creation of new large parklands is precluded by the shortage of land. While additional park space could be created by filling in part of the East River shoreline along South Street, this is not likely to occur within the foreseeable future. However, there is space available in the East River Park, adjacent to the community, but at present poorly laid out and under-used. The most realistic way to "gain" parkland for the area over the next few years is by enhancing and redesigning this space so that it can be used by more people and for more events.

Because it is hard to get to, poorly designed, and badly maintained, the East River Park is understandably not very popular with the people of the Lower East Side. However, it has inherent qualities which could trans-

from a neglected, unappealing place to a focus of community and metropolitan life: its 57 acres available for a variety of activities, its superb location facing on the East River, and its shape, which makes it adjacent to most of the community.

The unpopularity of the East River Park--despite the fact that it is the community's largest open space and recreation area--can be attributed to three related circumstances: (See Illustration of Existing Park)

Access: The Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) Drive runs along the entire edge of the park at the same grade level as the park and the bordering housing projects. Six lanes of dense, fast-moving traffic and the service road form a very effective barrier to people seeking to cross over to the park. Only four pedestrian bridges pierce this barrier over the mile and a quarter length of the park. There is no way to reach the park by car. Under these circumstances, going to the park is hardly a casual matter but involves a deliberate choice of how to get there and where to end up. It is not hard to understand why, even during the summer, youngsters prefer to play in the streets and schoolyards rather than make the circuitous journey to the East River Park.

Activities: The East River Park is remarkably free of people, except for weekends during the warmer weather, and special events, such as concerts at the bandstand. Of course, its inaccessibility is partly responsible for this situation, but the arrangement of facilities also contributes to its unpopularity. Much of the space is simply barren pavement, or allotted to activities that are not in great local demand, for example, the enclosed ballfields that are used mainly by schools outside the community. Other playing spaces merely duplicate those that are readily available in more convenient parts of the neighborhood. The design of the park is hardly conducive to popularity: the bridges over the highway do not generally lead to specific events, there is little relation between the entrances (bridges) and the organization of activities within the park. Moreover, the park is poorly maintained, benches and swings are broken, trash accumulates, and its appearance is generally shabby.

Security: As a result of poor access and uninviting activities, the park is often sparsely populated, which deters other users, reinforcing the widespread belief that the park is dangerous and is to be avoided. Fear is most prevalent among elderly people and the parents of young children, groups that would otherwise be attracted to a large park in a crowded neighborhood.

General solutions for dealing with the overlapping problems of inadequate access, the under-use of activities, poor design and maintenance, and user safety are as follows:

Access: A series of attractive and convenient pedestrian and automotive connections between the park and the community must be created if the East River Park is to fulfill its potential as a gathering and recreation place. First, access for local residents will be improved by reconstructing existing pedestrian bridges, adding new bridges at selected points, and relating existing streets and paths and clusters



ILLUSTRATION 10

EXISTING ACTIVITIES

of activities: Use the Lower East Side and the park.

Secondly, vehicular access, mainly for metropolitan residents, will be facilitated by establishing new bus routes that serve the improved bus system, by constructing ramps from the FDR Drive, and by providing a limited number of parking spaces in the park for buses.

Activities: The life of the park emanates from the events that take place within it. Improved access will be of little value, nor will people feel safer, unless the park has vitality and attracts a larger and more varied group of users. Therefore, under-used, neglected, and redundant spaces and facilities will be replaced with new ones appealing to larger and more diverse groups, and usable for more months of the year. Barren pavement and practice ball fields are to be replaced by an all-year round skating rink, a swimming pool, and a new elementary school. Furthermore, activities within the park will be reorganized to correspond to the new system of entrance bridges and ramps spanning the highway.

Security: The principal way of making the Park safer will be to make it more inviting and accessible, thus more populated. Such measures as floodlighting and additional police patrols will also help reassure patrons.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE

Access

Pedestrian access to the East River Park is now limited to only four pedestrian bridges spanning the FDR Drive, in addition to the Houston Street ramps at traffic level. Running from north to south, they are located at 10th Street, 6th Street, Delancey Street, and Corlears Hook Park, near Cherry Street. The most successful entrances to the park are at Houston Street and Corlears Hook Park. They relate most naturally to the grade levels on both sides of the highway and join centers of activity in the residential community with recreational features in the park.

Three of the existing entrances, at 10th Street, 6th Street, and Delancey Street, take some 400 feet of ramp and bridge to cross 150 feet of road, while they are utilitarian for women wheeling baby carriages and children on bicycles (the latter are presently forbidden in the park), they are a very circuitous means of entry for most people. About nine out of ten of the present users of the Park are pedestrians who are fully capable of negotiating stairs. Also, these ramps do not relate to centers of activity, streets or paths either in the residential community or in the park.

The design proposal for the park provides additional access in the form of new stepped bridges and supplemental ramps. (See Detail of 8th Street Bridge.) In addition to providing a much more direct crossing over the FDR Drive, the new bridges link park activities to pedestrian paths in the projects, which in turn lead to the more important east-west streets that carry the life of the Lower East Side. For example, the new pedestrian bridge at Jacob Riis

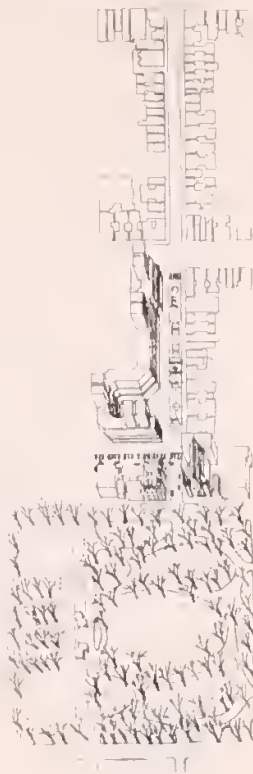


ILLUSTRATION 11 EIGHTH STREET GEOMETRIC

Houses leads to a play space and Plaza and then back to 8th Street and Tompkins Square Park. (See E. 8th Street Illustration) Similarly, the bridge at Lillian Wald Houses is linked to 5th Street and back to the block with Junior High School 71, while the bridge at Baruch Houses leads back to Columbia and Gomer Houses and Rivington Street.

For people coming from outside the community the most important entry to the park will be the new stop on the Lower East Side subway "loop" at Sixth Street and Avenue C. The park will be within a five minute walk of the subway via Sixth Street and the improved bridge over the FDR Drive at Sixth Street.

One new bus route and two re-routed lines will make the park more accessible to residents and visitors. Two of them will run along the Drive's western service road, stopping at the pedestrian bridges over the roadway. Such routes, combined with reduced fares for the elderly and school children, can encourage greater use of the park by residents and others.

The FDR Drive, one of Manhattan's principal traffic arterials, carries a continuous and heavy flow of traffic throughout the day. Unlike the Henry Hudson Parkway, where a driver can get to Riverside Park right from the road, the FDR Drive offers no direct access to its bordering park. There are also no turn-off lanes for motorists to stop and enjoy the view of the park and river. A plaza along the FDR Drive at 18th Street gives some idea of how a modest roadside parking area might be used. Although the small parking lot here and ramps and benches has little to commend it beyond a few benches and a view of the river, it attracts drivers from the FDR Drive all day long. It is an accidental delight that is highly successful and should be the pattern for similar features at the East River Park. The northern and southern ends of the park are especially underused. At the southern

end there are two paved areas serving no particular purpose, while the northern end is used by the Sanitation Department for storage. Both these areas should be turned into car parking areas for park patrons.

The third and largest parking area in the redesigned park is east of Houston Street at the mid-point of the park. Presently used for football and baseball practice fields, this area should be rebuilt to provide a new elementary school, a skating rink, and a parking lot for 150 cars and some school buses. One reason for placing the main parking area off Houston Street is to take advantage of the existing on and off ramps. When these ramps are widened at their base, they will provide access and egress to the parking lot and school without sacrificing much of the park. Also, the Houston Street overpass permits easy turns for cars approaching the park from either north or south.

The new elementary school is sited to take advantage of the nearby track, play fields, and field-house. Athletes from secondary schools in Manhattan and other boroughs arriving by school bus are the principal users of these facilities. (See Illustration of Houston Street Entrance) The buses usually park on the grounds of the nearby housing projects and the boys walk over the ramps to the park. Placing the bus parking area near the new school and adjacent to the track will be a practical benefit to schools in the metropolitan area.

Activities

The park was observed over a period of several months to ascertain which recreation facilities and areas were utilized and which were neglected. The results of these observations are as follows:

East River Park presently has the following facilities, running from north to south (See Illustration of Existing Park):

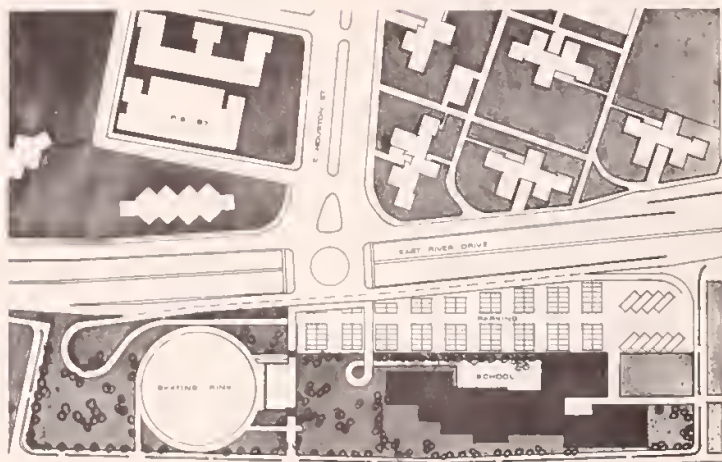


ILLUSTRATION 12 EAST RIVER PARK AT HOUSTON STREET

- children's playground (slated for rehabilitation)
- new baseball field, for Little League use
- new sitting and chess-playing area
- athletic field and track used mainly by schools or for formal sports events
- fenced-in football and baseball practice fields, reserved for high school athletics, but underused
- sitting area
- rotunda and bandstand (slated for rehabilitation) and an outdoor dancing area, all of which are used intermittently
- tennis courts, mainly used by people from outside the Lower East Side
- handball courts under the bridge
- fenced-in and paved playgrounds and a small picnic area which are usually deserted
- football and baseball practice fields which are used by the community
- amphitheater, not in use most of the summer for lack of money for activities
- area not yet developed, where a skating rink had once been envisioned

The following specific recommendations for retaining and improving certain facilities and replacing others are based on the observation. Such areas as the children's

playground at 11th Street and the practice fields near Houston Street will be replaced with facilities to attract and accommodate large and varied groups of people, including family groups and younger teenagers who are not now drawn to the park. Major new facilities include (See Map of Proposed New Activities):

New elementary school: One of the most exasperating locational issues on the Lower East Side is finding sites for new schools. Given the density of the tenement housing, a new school and its adjoining playground can easily mean the displacement of several hundred families. But a new school in a visible and central location in the park can at once re-activate a moribund community resource, and help meet the critical need for replacement schools without causing any relocation.

It is therefore proposed that a new elementary school be built on the practice fields opposite Houston Street, permitting two old schools, P.S. 188 and P.S. 97, to be replaced without displacing any families. The school, serving some 1800 children, will be an important symbol of security in the park, radically altering its present image. The park can easily absorb the additional use and will not miss the now neglected acreage, while the school will benefit greatly from the surrounding parkland.

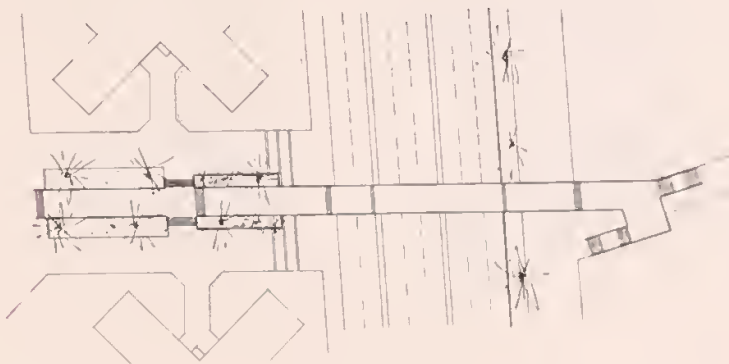


ILLUSTRATION 13

DETAIL OF EIGHTH STREET BRIDGE TO PARK

Swimming pool - Swimming pools are one of the most popular types of recreation in crowded inner-city areas; the Lower East Side presently has only one public pool. It is proposed that another be added in the East River Park at what is now the paved area opposite Crokers Hook Park near the Amphitheater. Access over the existing pedestrian bridge would be easy for youngsters from the nearby apartment buildings and tenements.

Skating rink: The winter-summer skating rink that the Lower East Side has long sought should be built on one of the practice fields opposite Houston Street between the new school and the picnic area. Walkers to the rink would cross the Houston Street bridge, while those arriving by car would use the parking lot near the school.

New and rehabilitated facilities in the park should be deployed and designed so that they are related to the pedestrian bridges and ramps leading to the park. Activities serving large numbers of people, such as the pool, skating rink and bandstand, should be close to the park's entrances, while less heavily used spaces, such as ballfields, can be further from the entrances. A similar logic should apply to patron groups: activities for young children (and accompanying adults) and elderly people, such as playgrounds and small sitting places, will generally be nearer to the entrances than activities used by more agile teenagers and young adults.

3. Security

All the improvements will contribute to a safer park by making it more popular and creating additional entrances. The school will change the park's image as a deserted and hazardous place. Events drawing more people at all hours will replace underused and uninviting facilities. All activities will be organized in relation to the pedestrian bridges, making the park easier to use in a casual, spontaneous way.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Within the context of the recommendations noted above there are specific changes that can be made within the five to six year span of the Development Plan. These items, forming part of a unified scheme for rebuilding the Park, can be executed separately depending on the availability of capital funds and the demands of park management. Other changes will be introduced in later years.

Access

More direct pedestrian access to the park can be provided, first, by adding a ramp to the bridge spanning the FDR Drive at East 10th Street from the Lillian Wald Houses, and secondly, by building a staircase for the East 6th Street bridge at Jacob Riis Houses.

While both improvements will require modifying existing crossings, the gain in direct access to the park will be well worth it. New crossings at key points will connect a redesigned park to paths and places in the adjacent housing projects and to emphasized east-west streets, as outlined earlier. (See Illustration of Eighth Street).

The two re-routed bus lines and one new line will permit easy access to the park from adjoining blocks and subway stations. Running along the FDR Drive's western service road, the new lines will stop at each of the pedestrian crossings spanning the Drive.

As noted above, the new parking spaces along the FDR Drive, as well as the use of the northern and southern end spaces for parking, will encourage people to come to the park by automobile. (See Map of Proposed New Activities) (Some new lanes will be required at the northern parking area, but none will intrude on any important park land.)

Activities

Several of the park areas used on a relatively continuous basis should be retained, but need attention, ranging from minor repairs to extensive renovation; all of them could be more inviting if they were sufficiently staffed and properly maintained, and if their activities were publicized in the neighborhood.

In addition to the new swimming pool and skating rink which should be completed by 1975, there are other more modest changes that should be made by then:

Bicycle path: Although bicycles are officially banned from the park, in practice they are very common. In view of the natural attraction between bicycles and parks, a new bicycle path winding through the entire park is proposed. A right-of-way is provided by devoting the underused path on the western edge (bordering the FDR Drive) to bicycles and taking part of the pedestrian walk along the East River.

Mother Goose Maze: For pre-school children (and accompanying parents) a new Mother Goose maze and playground should be built at the enclosed and underused children's playground at Delancey Street. Access will be over the ramp at Delancey Street.

Picnic grove: A new three-quarter acre picnic grove opposite Houston Street (south of the new skating rink) will look out towards the river.

Security

As stated earlier, the new improvements attracting more people to the park at different times will do most to make it safer. Increased and more deliberate police patrols and better floodlighting would also add to personal safety. Funds for the latter are in the 1969-70 Capital Budget.

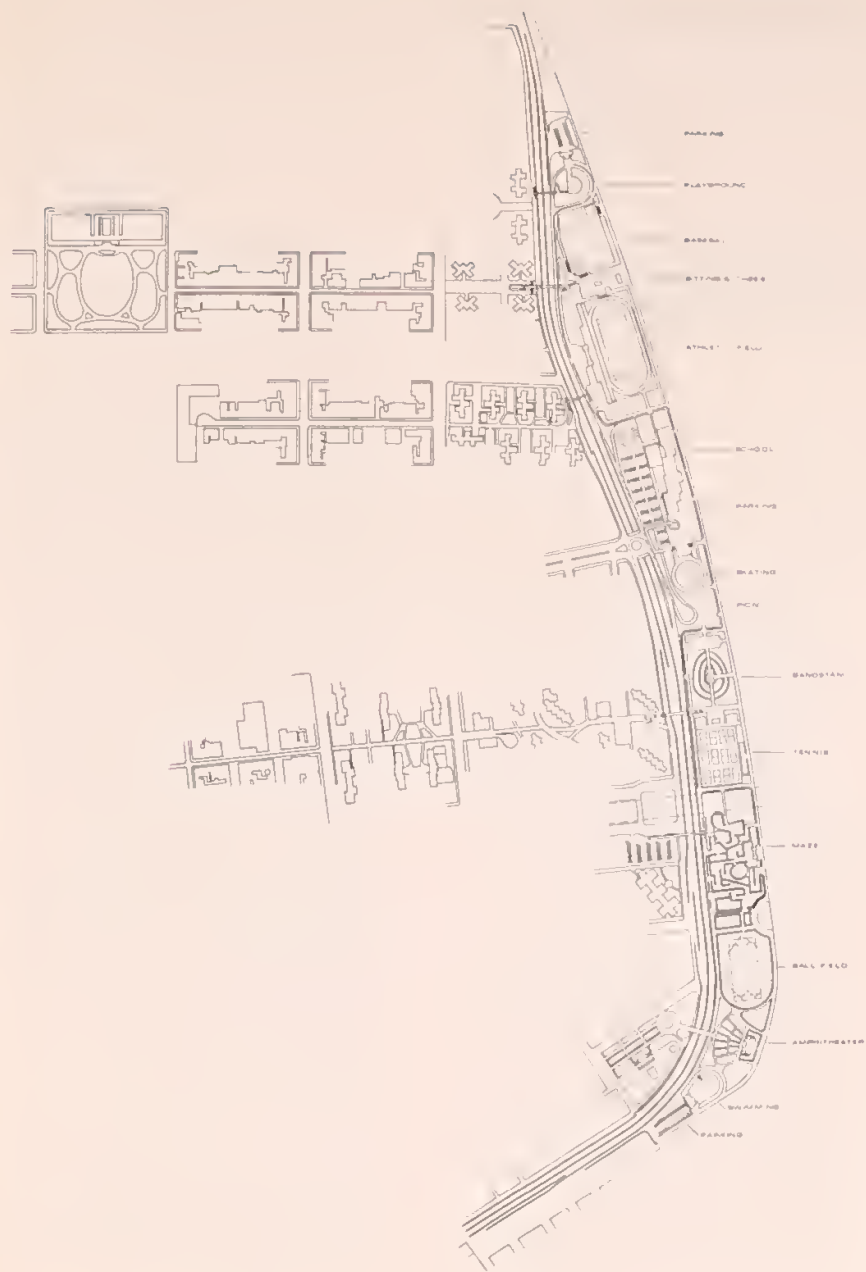


ILLUSTRATION 14

PROPOSED NEW ACTIVITIES

14. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES

Bibliographies and source material lists have been compiled for three chapters--Environmental Protection, Schools and Education and Health and Medical Services--where a reasonable number of outside sources were consulted and where a list of these sources would be most helpful to readers. Where appropriate, other sources are listed in the text.

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Oscar Newman, together with Ghislaine Hermanuz, did the physical planning studies, such as of zoning and transportation in the report.

Maurice Blanc and Rolando Laveist prepared the base maps and the final maps for printing.

Vivian N. Brown, Lynne Schwartz, Edward F.X. Ryan, Jr., and Peter Abeles and Harry Schwartz each wrote parts of the final report.

The report and the graphic material was designed by Ghislaine Hermanuz and assembled by her and Vivian N. Brown. Lynne Schwartz, Rebecca McSwain and Janette Cooke typed the final pages.

The book was lovingly printed by Reproductions for Industry.

